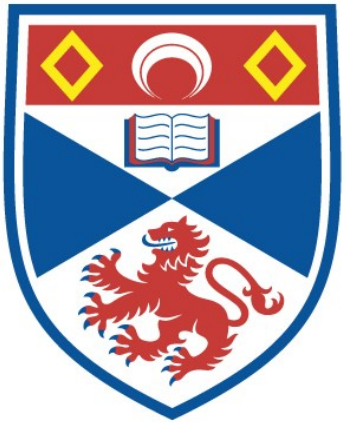
JESUS AND THE JUBILEE, LUKE 4 : 16-30, THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE YEAR O FTHE JUBILEE IN THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Donald Wilford Blosser

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



1979

JESUS AND THE JUBILEE

Luke 4:16-30

The Year of Jubilee and Its Significance in the Gospel of Luke

A Dissertation
presented
to
The Faculty of St. Mary's College
The University of St. Andrews
St. Andrews, Scotland

In Partial Fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Donald Wilford Blosser
28 February, 1979

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the following thesis is based on the results of research carried out by myself, that it is my own composition and that it has not previously been presented for a Higher Degree. The research was carried out at the University of St. Andrews under the supervision of Dr. G. A. Weir.

.....

CERTIFICATE

I certify that Donald Wilford Blosser has fulfilled the conditions of the resolution of the University Court, 1967 No. 1, and that he is qualified to submit this thesis in application for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

.....

Dr. G. A. Weir
St. Mary's College
University of St. Andrews

I attended Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana, graduating in 1959 with the Bachelor of Science degree, majoring in History and English. The following year I entered Goshen College Biblical Seminary, and in 1965 graduated from the Goshen division of the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana with the Bachelor of Divinity degree.

I have completed two units of Clinical Pastoral Education studies, having worked in North Carolina (1967), Pennsylvania (1972), and Delaware (1974).

From 1960 to 1969 I was pastor of the Freeport Illinois Mennonite Church, and from 1969 to 1976 was pastor of the Akron Pennsylvania Mennonite Church.

In 1976 I enrolled in St. Mary's College, the University of St. Andrews, and in the Spring of 1977 was accepted into the graduate research program of the University of St. Andrews.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The regulations of St. Andrews University say that the work which is done on a Ph.D. must be your own, but in reality many persons have played very significant roles in this three year study of the Biblical Jubilee. One cannot name them all, for they include friends in Anstruther and the surrounding communities, as well as others in many different communities in the States. But among them are some who have had such a vital part in the entire project that special words of appreciation are in order. I am very grateful to:

- Carolyn, for never waivering in her confidence, and for the daily encouragement and support which she gave.
- Lois, John, Kathy, Sandra and Miriam for their part in making our family life such a pleasant experience, and for the many good times which we had together in Scotland.
- The members of the Akron Mennonite Church for their counsel in working through the decision to actually undertake the project, and for their most generous financial support for the first two years.
- A special group of friends who demonstrated their belief in us by practicing the spirit of Jubilee with their own resources, making regular contributions towards meeting the living expenses of our family. They are not identified here by name, but their friendship and assistance was a constant source of inspiration.
- Dr. Alistair Weir, who gave patient and very competent supervision to the study, and who, in the process, became a very trusted friend and valued Christian brother.

Each of these persons, along with many others, have in their own particular way had a hand in the completion of this project. I am constantly grateful for those persons who walk through life with me.

ABBREVIATIONS

AB.	- Anchor Bible
AJPhilol.	- American Journal of Philology
AJT.	- American Journal of Theology
Ant.	- Jewish Antiquities (Josephus)
BBB.	- Bonner Biblischer Beitrag
BBC.	- Broadman Bible Commentary
BHK.	- Biblia Hebraica
BHS.	- Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
BJRL.	- Bulletin of the John Rylands Library
BZAW.	- Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
BZNW.	- Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBC.	- Cambridge Bible Commentary on the New English Bible
CBQ.	- Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CBSC.	- Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges
ETL.	- Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses
ExpT.	- Expository Times
HDB.	- Hastings Dictionary of the Bible
HUCA.	- Hebrew Union College Annual
IB.	- Interpreter's Bible
ICC.	- International Critical Commentary
IDB.	- Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible
JBL.	- Journal of Biblical Literature
JJS.	- Journal of Jewish Studies
JQR.	- Jewish Quarterly Review
JTS.	- Journal of Theological Studies
LSJ.	- Liddell, Scott, Jones, Greek-English Lexicon, 9th ed.
LXX.	- Septuagint
MT.	- Massoretic Text
NCB.	- New Century Bible
NIDNTT.	- New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology
NovTest.	- Novum Testamentum
NTS.	- New Testament Studies
REJ.	- Revue des Etudes Juives
TDNT.	- Theological Dictionary of the New Testament
ThZ.	- Theologische Zeitschrift
TLZ.	- Theologische Literaturzeitung
TSK.	- Theologische Studien und Kritiken
TU.	- Texte und Untersuchung
UBS.	- United Bible Societies
VT.	- Vetus Testamentum
WCC.	- World Council of Churches
WR.	- Westminster Review
ZAW.	- Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZNW.	- Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The public ministry of Jesus (as recorded by Luke) opens with a brief summary reference to a general teaching ministry (4:14-15). But this is quickly overshadowed by the vivid account of Jesus' appearance in his hometown synagogue at Nazareth (4:16-30). It is clear that Luke saw particular importance in this event, and that he gave it special programmatic significance. The crucial nature of this text is generally accepted by scholars, but the identification of the central theme has led to wide diversity of opinion.[1] In recent years, attention has been given to the theme of Jubilee as being the core element for this story, and indeed, as one of the keys for understanding the total ministry of Jesus.[2] Such a claim demands further examination. It is the task of this research to examine the Luke 4:16-30 text in order to show whether or not the jubilee theme was, in fact, used by Jesus on that occasion, then further, to determine where else it occurs in Luke's gospel, and the significance this provides for understanding the ministry of Jesus.

---

[1] Scholarly acceptance will be discussed when dealing with the text itself. The reasons suggested for Luke having told the story are: Jesus and the Spirit; Jesus and the Old Testament Prophets; The announcement of the Kingdom of God; faith as the basis for miracles; the mission to the Gentiles; the rejection by the Jews; and the ultimate triumph of Jesus.

[2] John H. Yoder, The Politics of Jesus (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972) pp. 64-77 has provided much of the stimulus for this theme. His work is a translation of one chapter from A. Trocmé, Jesus and the Non-Violent Revolution (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1973), pp. 41-52. The entire book was translated by M. Shank and M. Miller.

Since the theme of Jubilee was not an original creation by Jesus, our procedure will be to begin with the legislation as it occurs in Leviticus (noting also Exodus and Deuteronomy), examining its meaning in that setting, then following it through the Old Testament to determine how it developed over the generations, and to what extent it was actually observed. We will also examine the Intertestamental literature in order to show how the concept of jubilee was understood by the people who heard Jesus make the proclamation at Nazareth.

We will then give extensive attention to the Luke 4 text. We will look at 1) the sources and structure used by Luke in telling the story; 2) the issue of how the Isaiah text was selected; 3) the content of the quotation and the application which Jesus made from it; and 4) the reaction of the synagogue participants to his proclamation. We will also note the important Christological questions which are raised by this theme in Luke.

It will then be necessary to follow the jubilee theme through the gospel of Luke, showing how it provides a foundation for many of the events and stories which are recorded there. Finally, we will comment on the issues which are raised by the presence of the jubilee theme in Luke's gospel.

CHAPTER I

THE YEAR OF JUBILEE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

> "And you shall count seven weeks of years . . . then you shall send abroad the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month . . . and you shall hallow the fiftieth year . . . it shall be a jubilee for you." (Lev. 25:8a,9a,10ac)

The jubilee year is described in Lev. 25 as the culmination of seven sabbath year celebrations. The basic elements were:

1) the proclamation of liberty throughout the land - vs 10.

2) the return of all property to its original owners - vs 10.

3) the land remained fallow - vs 11.

A fourth element, cancellation of debts, is not stated in the Leviticus text, but it is included in the sabbath year regulations of Dt. 15:2ff.

The origin of the jubilee laws is disputed, as is the question of how faithfully they were observed. There is a continuing debate on the question of whether they were ever observed with any consistency in Jewish history. The fiftieth year[1] celebrations would have had radical effects upon the economy had they ever been put into practice.

It will be our task to examine the origin and content of the jubilee

---

[1] The question of whether the jubilee was the forty-ninth or fiftieth year will be noted in an appropriate section. We will use the term "fiftieth" without any intention of declaring ourselves at this time on that issue (see Lev. 25:10).

legislation as recorded primarily in Leviticus, but also in Exodus and Deuteronomy. We will then trace their impact upon Jewish life in order to determine if and in what manner they were observed.

A. THE ORIGIN OF THE JUBILEE

1. The Name

The fiftieth year was to be a jubilee. The Hebrew word is יובל (yōbēl, meaning ram's horn). The English "jubilee" is a transliteration of the Latin jubile. A study of the usage of yōbēl shows that it occurs twenty-six times in the Old Testament with two closely related meanings. There is the common meaning of "ram's horn" which was blown as a trumpet, and also the more technical reference to the year which was announced by a blast on the ram's horn. Klostermann, however, does not believe that the two words should be connected in their meanings.

> "It is a long way from lamb to ram, from ram to ram's horn, from ram's horn to the instrument made from it or to look like it, from the instrument to its blast, and finally from the blast to the period of time which was proclaimed by it."[1]

---

[1] August Klostermann, "Über die Kalendarische Bedeutung des Jobeljahres" TSK 53, (1880), p. 737. Noth agrees, seeing the name as coming from a much older tradition. He refers to Lev. 25:9 where šōpār (in his view a much later word also meaning "ram's horn") is used. Martin Noth, Leviticus (London: SCM, 1965), p. 184. Robert J. North, Sociology of the Biblical Jubilee (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1954), pp. 102-108 gives a detailed study of etymologies based on yābal: a) gift: He cites Nicolskij "Origin of the Jubilee" (a Russian article reviewed in ZAW 50) who says that the verbal noun of ybl would be belet/bilt, corresponding in sense to the participial noun yōbēl. Nicolskij goes to the Akkadian noun biltu (gift), then derives the jubilee idea from Lev. 27:14-24 (votive gifts). b) Intercalation: This indicates that the jubilee was a lengthening out (based on the active participal yōbēl), designating a period of time used to fill out the calendar year. c) Music: from the biliteral root bl "to overflow, to exult". d) Release: (linked to the verb yābal), giving an emphasis to the concept of "ransom, to take away", and translated aphesis in the LXX. North himself concludes that the meaning comes from its close association with the year which is introduced by the blast on the ram's horn.

But Klostermann's distinction is exaggerated. The connection of the ram's horn with the year which was ushered in by its blast seems clear. The jubilee was the year of the yōbēl.

2. Development of the Jubilee Laws

Precisely when the jubilee laws were written is open to much debate. Two basic times are given most serious consideration in determining the date of their composition: a) the occupation of Palestine, and b) the return of the exiles from Babylon.

Wacholder sees a very early pre-exilic norm which dates most probably from the time of the inauguration of the sabbath. He calls attention to the brevity and technical tone of Neh. 10:31, "We will forego the crops of the seventh year and the exaction of every debt", as evidence that this was a well known, but long neglected institution.[1]

Alt had also advocated this early dating, saying that the setting for the sabbath year could have been before farming had become the centre of the Israelite economy. He also notes that an agricultural economy was well known to the Israelites while in Egypt, and that the jubilee laws speak directly to some of the abuses of land ownership which they had experienced in Egypt.[2]

A similar early date is proposed by Heinisch in his attempt to preserve as much Mosaic tradition as possible. He assigns the sabbath laws of vv. 1-7 and 18-22 to the wilderness wanderings since the law is phrased in future terms "when you come into the land". Heinisch then

---

[1]Ben Zion Wacholder, "The Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles During the Second Temple and the Early Rabbinic Period", HUCA 44 (1973), p. 157.

[2]Albrecht Alt, "Die Ursprünge des Israelitischen Rechts", Berichte der Sächsischen Akademie 86/1 (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1934), p. 65.

assigns vv. 8,9a,9c-12 (the nucleus of the jubilee teachings) to the last days of Moses. Vv. 13-17 were inserted during the period of the judges, with vv. 23-24 and 39-55 coming from the tenth century. (These are placed later because of their references to walled cities and the presence of foreigners.) V. 9b plus vv. 35-38 fit into the reign of Solomon, and vv. 17, 43 and 53 are undated later glosses.[1]

Eichrodt agrees with this close Mosaic association. He says that the jubilee laws cannot be conceived of as innovations coming out of the confusion of the Occupation Era, but only as the immediate result of the transformation of the law by Moses in preparation for the Occupation.[2]

Jirku places the formation of the laws just slightly later, coming soon after the Israelites had entered Palestine. He sees the laws as an extension of the patriarchal desert economy into the agrarian setting of Palestine. The unity of the people and the compact organization of the tribe was to be preserved by an emphasis upon common possession of the land. Selfish individualism which is often reflected in private ownership was eliminated by the purely usufructian approach to the land. Jirku says:

> "At that moment when tribes . . . not individuals, took possession of the land, then was the only possibility in the course of Israelite history for views like those of the jubilee to emerge."[3]

He acknowledges the work of a later compiler who deliberately preserved the formula set out by his predecessors. He identifies four distinct forms in the jubilee laws:

1) "Thou shalt" (2nd person singular) in vv. 8-9a, 15-16, coming

---

[1] Paul Heinisch, Das Buch Leviticus (Bonn: Hanstein, 1935), p. 116.

[2] Walther Eichrodt, "Religionsgeschichte Israels" Historia Mundi 2 (Berne: Francke, 1953), p. 385.

[3] Anton Jirku, "Das Israelitische Jobeljahr", Reinhold-Seeberg Festschrift, (Leipzig: Schall, 1929), p. 175.

just after the occupation of Palestine.

2) "Ye shall" (2nd person plural) in vv. 9b-13, 23-24 from around 1100 BC.

3) "If you" in vv. 25, 39-41, 47-54 from around 700 BC.

4) "If someone" in vv. 26-34 from around 600 BC.

He notes specifically v. 9, where "you shall send abroad the trumpet" is repeated, once with the second person singular (9a), and the second-time with the second person plural (9b). He says that this indicates there has been a fusion of sources at this point.[1]

North places these laws just prior to the critical period of the Occupation. The community stood at a vital point in their history. The lawgiver is thinking ahead and uses a future date as his reference point. The Israelites were entering upon a new way of life. Some farmers would be successful, others would not. Those who succeeded would have to help those who did not, so that after a few years of supervision they would be ready to work again on their own. The seventh year of the cycle was seen as a preliminary step where the serf would have free control of his own land. During this year, he could prove his ability to farm and thus regain control of his land. While Lev. 25:2-7 does not say that the sabbath year rest should occur more than once, North says that the calculation of the jubilee is based on its regular occurrence. He is clear, however, that the fifty year cycle was intended for one time only. It was to be a fresh start for the bankrupt Israelite. The proclamation of the fiftieth year was to indicate the beginning of economic rehabilitation which would take place during the next few years. One should not see "in this year" (Lev. 25:13) as meaning a literal year of 365 days, but rather as a figure of speech meaning "vague general time".

---

[1] Jirku, pp. 174-178.

This fiftieth year came and went, but there was no jubilee celebration. But neither was there any reason to remove the law from the records, so it was retained, debated and passed on to future generations as a legislative ideal, even though the law itself was never enforced.[1]

Noth accepts the possibility of pre-exilic beginnings for the jubilee laws, but he says that the central themes presuppose that Israel is settled in a moderately civilized manner across the land. The mention of walled cities is a reference to Canaanite cities, implying a rather complete assimilation of Israel into the Canaanite way of life, something which hardly happened before the early monarchy. The dating by use of numbered months is additional evidence supporting a later date.[2]

Porter, while seeing this material as the work of a "Holiness Code compiler" during the exile, ties it in spirit to the Occupation. Old laws dealing with economic and social customs were collected, organized and interpreted with the twin goals of preserving the ancient customs observed when Israel was settling into the land, and of reviving them as a practical basis for the restored nation which the compiler anticipated.[3]

"Distinct and late in authorship" is the opinion of Carpenter. The basis for this belief is that it interrupts the accounts of the sabbath year and is nowhere mentioned in any writing earlier than the basic document of P. Further, it depends upon the day of atonement, which is a post-Ezran concept. However, Carpenter grants that it has so many affinities with the Holiness Code that the idea of a period of seven sabbaths of years could have been an early development. Thus the complex of laws progressed

---

[1]North, Sociology, pp 206-211.

[2]Noth, Leviticus, p. 185.

[3]J.R.Porter, Leviticus, (Cambridge: University Press, 1976), p. 197.

from the sabbath year to the seven sabbaths of years to the jubilee.[1]

Ginzberg rather firmly states that the jubilee laws were the work of a priestly writer during the exile. He took many of the old economic institutions and put them into a new theocratic framework. In order to ensure their success, the editor made several compromises:

1) He extended the period of service for slaves from an individually determined seven years to a universally fixed fifty years.

2) He dropped the seven year debt release.

3) He disregarded the third year tithes for the poor.

4) He changed the terms for the redemption of city property, and did not include such property in the jubilee redemption.

These compromises were aimed at placating the rich in order to gain their support. But the jubilee remained unobserved because the laws were out of touch with the later developments of Jewish life as the exiles returned to Palestine.[2]

De Vaux bluntly states that the jubilee was a late and ineffectual attempt to make the sabbath laws more stringent by extending them to the land, while at the same time making them easier to obey by spacing out the years of remission.[3]

Morgenstern is equally firm as he says:

> "Under any conditions, the jubilee year persisted in Jewish usage only as the largest unit of time reckoning and nothing more. Eventually it became obsolete."[4]

---

[1] J. Estlin Carpenter, Composition of the Hexateuch, (London: Longmans, 1902), p. 291.

[2] Eli Ginzberg, "Studies in the Economics of the Bible", JQR 22 (1931), p. 390.

[3] Roland de Vaux, Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions, (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1961), p. 177.

[4] J. Morgenstern, "Jubilee", IDB, (New York: Abingdon, 1962), p. 1002.

It is our conclusion that the decision between the Occupation and the Exile for the origin of the jubilee laws can be made by a 'both/and' approach. The original concepts of the laws go back to the time of the occupation of the Promised Land. The laws have a primitive framework which reflects a people who were just starting out on a new way of life. The later additions indicate changes which were necessary due to the untested content of some portions of the laws. The laws themselves are from the period leading to the Occupation (and including the early Occupation years), rather than being Exilic creations. The reference to slave release is built upon Israel's experience in Egypt. One would expect the slavery regulations after they had themselves been slaves. The economic implications of jubilee reflect a time when property was still evenly distributed (or even yet to be distributed), and again support an early date. These primitive laws were for the most part ignored. During the exile, a priestly writer attempted to set out some guidelines for the returning exiles and he drew upon these laws, introducing them again with some revisions. But they were considered to be impractical, thus they were not obeyed.

3. The Sabbath Year and the Jubilee Year

Lev. 25 immediately confronts one with the obvious similarities of the sabbath year and the jubilee year. They are so interwoven that it is difficult to examine the jubilee year without including the sabbath year.

Noth observes that the sabbath year and the jubilee year have the same elementary theme -- restitutio in integrum (the restitution of the original condition). He concludes that the jubilee year was a sabbath year, but that it was special in that it had the additional call to restore property ownership.[1]

---

[1] Noth, Leviticus, p. 183-184.

A different relationship is seen by Lemche. He questions whether the seven year sabbath cycle was universally fixed. He feels that it was more probably fixed individually for each slave or each fallow field. This led to a secondary amalgamation of the fallow year laws and the social laws of Lev. 25 to form the jubilee. The year of jubilee, occurring at forty-nine year intervals, was interpreted as a standard country-wide celebration. The practical and economic similarities inspired the writer to unite the two years, making the jubilee year coincide with the seventh sabbath year.[1]

North agrees that the sabbath year and the jubilee year were two different years which later merged into one simultaneous year, but he arrives at this conclusion via a different route. He sees each year originally being enumerated in a calendar of liturgical feasts, and assumes that both involved some form of work stoppage based on an analogy with the sabbath day. He gives four reasons for not having an identical source for the sabbath and jubilee years:

1) The humanitarian and agricultural elements of the sabbath year stress a particular and rotating year, while the cultic elements of the jubilee year stress a simultaneously observed year.

2) The time for the sabbath year is not always clear, sometimes it is given as coming after six years, sometimes after seven.

3) The formal object and spirit of the laws are different.

4) Leviticus 25 does not mention debt release.

From these North concludes that the two years have different origins and that they later merged so gradually and imperceptibly that no one can any longer draw distinct lines between them. The jubilee year became a heightened sabbath year observance.[2]

---

[1] N.P. Lemche, "The Manumission of Slaves--The Fallow Year--The Sabbatical Year--The Yobel Year", VT 26 (1976), p. 51.

[2] North, Sociology, pp. 184-185.

An entirely different approach is provided by the Lewys. They propose that the year was originally divided into seven periods of fifty days each. These 350 day years were joined first into a seven year cycle, then into a Pentacontad which consisted of seven 7 year cycles (49 years). The Assyrians referred to the seven times seven unit as dor. The Lewys believe that these seven year and forty-nine year time units appear in the Old Testament as the sabbath and jubilee periods. Neither, however, was seen as a full calendar year. The "sabbath year" was a period of days intercalated into the Pentacontad to fill out the year. The "jubilee year" was a period of time (not a normal calendar year) intercalated between the Pentacontads to recalibrate the calendar back into rhythm with the sun.[1]

That the "years" were not calendar years is accepted by Stone, but he has defined them as "years of seasons" having no definite duration. The sabbath year was to be a season of celebration, not lasting a full year. The jubilee year was much like the sabbath year, and it developed as a special celebration within the religious year. It should not be seen as independent of that year. It carried all the sabbath year regulations, plus the announcement of the beginning of a new era in the life of the poor farmer and labourer.[2]

Noth disagrees with this shortened period of time. He says:

> "The sabbath year was certainly a year, beginning with the autumn . . . from ploughing to sowing to harvest until the next ploughing season begins."[3]

Paton suggests that the jubilee is an editorial substitution for the sabbath year. His evidence is Lev. 26:34-35:

> "Then the land shall enjoy its sabbaths as long as

---

[1] Julius and Hildegard Lewy, "The Origin of the Week and the Oldest West Asiatic Calendar", HUCA 17 (1942), p. 68 and pp. 96-97.

[2] Edward Stone, "The Hebrew Jubilee Period", WR 175 (1911), p. 689.

[3] Noth, Leviticus, p. 186.

> it lies desolate, while you are in your enemies' land . . . . As long as it lies desolate it shall have rest, the rest which it had not in your sabbaths when you dwelt upon it."

Paton says that the writer knew there would be opposition to the new institution, so he made it to coincide with the sabbath year observance, then explained the captivity as the result of their past disobedience of the sabbath year laws. Thus he was able to reinstate the sabbath year as well as the jubilee institutions.[1]

4. The Jubilee as the Forty-Ninth or the Fiftieth Year

Lev. 25:8 says "the time of the seven weeks of years shall be to you forty-nine years." But Lev. 25:10 and 11 each refer to the jubilee as being the fiftieth year. Was the jubilee to be observed on the year of the seventh sabbath, or was it intended to be an additional year which followed immediately upon the seventh sabbath year and thus coincided with the first year of the new jubilee cycle?

In addition to the numerical references of forty-nine and fifty, there is the problem of how to interpret "then you shall send abroad" which occurs in v. 9. This describes how and when the jubilee is to be announced. If "then you shall send abroad" is interpreted "after this happens you shall send abroad", it would mean that the fiftieth year is in addition to the seventh sabbath year. But if "then you shall send abroad" is interpreted "at that time you shall send abroad", it would mean that the jubilee trumpet is blown during the forty-ninth year.

---

[1] L.B. Paton, "The Original Form of Leviticus xxiii and xxv", JBL 18-20 (1899-1901), p. 55. Ginzberg uses this same approach, p. 389. This text is often used as proof that the sabbath year was not part of the law prior to the exile. However, it only indicates that the law was not obeyed. Since it is unlikely that the writer would condemn Israel for not obeying a law that had not yet been given, it actually supports an early date for the jubilee legislation (rather than a late date, as Ginzberg argues).

Paton holds to a separate fiftieth year observance as he says that any view which makes the jubilee coincide with the seventh sabbath year is directly contrary to the text and to the testimony of antiquity.[1]

Strack believes that the jubilee is the fiftieth year, but he sees it as being altogether independent from the sabbath year cycle of sevens. This means that the jubilee could fall on any year of the sabbath cycle. He calculates that every seventh jubilee would be identical with a sabbath year, and only twice in a given 350 year period would there be two fallow years in succession.[2]

Others (such as Lewy and Stone, see above, p. 12) understand the fiftieth year as an intercalation of various lengths. This was caused by the operation of two calendar systems (moon and sun) which needed a brief regular period of intercalation in order to keep them harmonized. Stone points to the Egyptian calendar as an example of this problem. The pastoral (nomadic) people followed a moon calendar of twelve lunar periods which totalled 354 days. But the settled (agricultural) people followed the civil calendar which had twelve 30 day periods plus five days added at the end as religious festival days. He then sees the jubilee as the addition of "moon periods" in order to harmonize the two calendars.[3]

Leach proposes a more complicated system of intercalation. He suggests that the sabbath years are "seven day years" intercalated during the Feast of Tabernacles once every seven years, totalling forty-two days in forty-two years. These days were seen as days of total taboo and were not counted as days of the month. In the forty-ninth year, jubilee was

---

[1] Paton, p. 45.

[2] Hermann L. Strack, Die Bücher Exodus-Leviticus-Numeri, (Munich: Beck, 1894), p. 362.

[3] Stone, p. 684.

declared on the tenth day of the seventh month, and at this time a seventh intercalated period was observed. This was the jubilee. At the end of this brief "year", the seventh month of the forty-ninth year began again with the first day of the month. The time cycle was forty-nine years of 364 days each. In this cycle an intercalary period is inserted into the middle of every seventh year and is the sabbath year. These periods are seven days in length, with the seventh of these periods being seventeen days in length (seven days, plus the ten days that are cancelled out by starting the month over again). This matches a normal forty-nine year period of 365 days each, so that the cycle is back on proper schedule once again.[1]

Zeitlin interprets the jubilee as a forty-nine day period needed to harmonize the religious and civil calendars. He quotes Lev. 25:8 as saying, "all the days of the seven sabbaths of years will make for you forty-nine, one year."[2]

Klostermann also sees the problem stemming from sun-year calculations vs moon-year calculations. His solution is that the forty-nine sun years correspond to fifty moon years plus six synodic months. Therefore, at the beginning of the forty-ninth sun year, the fiftieth moon year is beginning its second half. The fiftieth moon year ends in the forty-ninth sun year in the seventh month, on the tenth day. At this point the jubilee year begins, lasting for six months, so that at the following Nisan both the sun and the moon years would coincide again.[3]

---

[1] E.R. Leach, "A Possible Method of Intercalation for the Calendar of the Book of Jubilees", VT 7 (1957), pp. 392-396. But Leach's work does not solve the problem because his figures do not match. They leave a 10 day discrepancy. Using the modern 365¼ day year, they still are off by 2 days.

[2] Zeitlin, "Notes relatives au calendrier juif", REJ 89 (1930), p. 354 as cited in North, Sociology, p. 126.

[3] Klostermann, p. 273.

Kugler points to the manner of enumeration to explain that the fiftieth year actually coincides with the forty-ninth year. He notes that in a series of numbers, the ancient Hebrews counted both the first and the last numbers. A sabbath year was the last of a week of years (7), and the jubilee was the last of seven weeks of years (49). Yet in Hebrew reckoning, which counted both first and last numbers, the jubilee could accurately be called the fiftieth year while in actual fact it was only the forty-ninth year.[1]

North sees the problem as being a simple vagary of language, with fifty being a loose summary term given as a casual rounding off of forty-nine, so that the jubilee should be seen as a "super-sabbath year" which was casually referred to in the rounded off term of fifty. It corresponds exactly to the seventh sabbath year and was not an additional year.[2]

Our conclusions are that the jubilee coincided with the seventh sabbath year. The numerical symbolism of the seventh sabbath as a very special time far surpasses the significance of the fiftieth year references in Lev. 25:10 and 11. The many references to the jubilee as being a full year make the suggestions of brief intercalary periods seem forced. Seeing the jubilee as the forty-ninth year does not deny that periods of intercalation may have taken place in order to harmonize various calendars; it simply does not use the intercalated periods to determine the jubilee. North treats the number fifty too casually to be convincing. We were unable to find any parallel usage to support his approach.

We see fifty as an element of Hebrew calculations affected by the method of inclusive reckoning. This factor, when harmonized with the

---

[1] FX Kugler, Von Moses bis Paulus: Forschungen zur Geschichte Israels, (Münster: Aschendorff, 1922), p. 5. Also Noth, Leviticus, p. 187.

[2] North, Sociology, p. 133.

theology of the sabbath/jubilee year regulations makes this solution the most convincing. Even so, it must be acknowledged that we hold this conclusion rather tentatively, recognizing it as the least problematic of several possibilities.

5. Jubilee Parallels in Other Ancient Law Codes

The search for the origin of the Jewish jubilee has led scholars to look for parallel concepts in other ancient legal codes, and to speculate over the influence of these codes upon the formulation of the jubilee laws.

a) Eshnunna

The Eshnunna tablets belong to the time between the fall of the third Ur dynasty and the rise of Hammurabi. Alexander sees in these texts five separate allusions to "breaking the tablets", which he interprets as the cancellation of a debt by destroying the contract. These were widespread general cancellations made by the king, and while they were not recurring in nature, Alexander feels that they are a source for debt cancellation in the biblical jubilee.[1] But de Vaux argues that this could also mean that the debt had been collected. The contract was destroyed when the obligation had been fulfilled. He insists that any parallel to the Bible is unjustified.[2]

Pritchard notes the Eshnunna regulation no. 29:

> "If anyone is hard up and sells his house, the owner of the house shall (be entitled to) redeem (it) whenever the purchaser (re) sells it."[3]

---

[1] John B. Alexander, "A Babylonian Year of Jubilee?", JBL 57 (1938), p. 78. He says there are 15 documents in the Nies Babylonian Collection at Yale University from the reign of Naram-Sin (the king who broke the tablets). He identifies only two: NBC 5403 and 5373.

[2] de Vaux, p. 176.

[3] J.B. Pritchard, Ancient Near Eastern Texts, 3rd ed, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 163

Pritchard sees this Eshnunna reference as a possible antecedent for property redemption in the jubilee.

b) The Code of Hammurabi

The best known and most comprehensive of the ancient law codes is the Code of Hammurabi. One finds clear similarities of both concept and form with the jubilee regulations. Morgenstern contends that these cannot be explained simply by an encounter with the post-Hammurabi Semites, since the Covenant Code shows elements that are considerably more archaic than Hammurabi. Morgenstern's arguments suggest the existence of a proto-Semitic tribal code which was a collection of customs preserved from the tribe's isolated setting in Ur. They brought these customs with them when they came to Palestine.[1] This implies that both the Code of Hammurabi and the Hebrew law codes developed from a similar formation of customs.

A study of the codes reveals the following parallel themes:[2]

1. Hammurabi 15-20 recognizes the existence of slavery and prescribes humane treatment for the slaves. The period of service for a slave was set at no more than three years. This is compared[3] with Lev. 25:40, 53 where the slave is to be treated as a hired hand and the owner is not to rule with harshness; also Deut. 15:12 where a limit of six years is set for the slavery term.

2. Hammurabi 23 and 25 give the obligation of the community to act in an emergency to avoid the enslavement of any member. The implication

---

[1] J. Morgenstern, "The Book of the Covenant", HUCA 7 (1930), p. 243.

[2] The Code of Hammurabi numbers are as given in Pritchard, Ancient Near Eastern Texts, 3rd ed., pp. 167-174.

[3] We use the word "compare", but this does not mean that the two texts are parallel. It means only that the same subject is discussed. Sometimes the comparison study will show a distinct contrast in the two codes.

is that if the person, his family or clan could not redeem the slave, the wider community should step in to make redemption. This is compared with Lev. 25:47-49 where specific responsibilities are outlined for redemption by a kinsman.

3. Hammurabi 30 says that if a field was vacated by an individual and then was used by another for a period of three years, the field becomes his property. This has a primitive background showing a connection between ownership and use of the land. This is to be compared with Lev. 25: 25-28 which also speaks of land ownership and use. But the Leviticus provision is the reverse of that in Hammurabi. Use of the land does not mean that ownership changes. The jubilee laws speak precisely to this issue and prevent it from happening.

4. Hammurabi 32 says that a man is to redeem himself, but that his property is not to be sold to pay for his redemption. The background for this is that the man would have nothing to which he could return, and his future would be very seriously impaired. This same theme of protecting the future of the freed slave is sensed in the connection of releasing land at the time when the slaves are released. Specifically, this is to be compared with Deut. 15:13-14 where the freed slave is to be given property and food to assist him in his new beginning; and with Lev. 25: 25-28 where ultimate property rights are non-transferable.

5. Hammurabi 36-41 give regulations for the preservation and limitation of land sales. These are compared with Lev. 25:29-34 where Levitical sale restrictions are given.

6. Hammurabi 44 speaks of the fallow fields. This is compared with Lev. 25:3-7 which also speaks of the fallow year.

7. Hammurabi 71 states that a bordering estate which does not have

feudal obligations may be purchased. This implies that there are feudal lands which may not be purchased. This is to be compared with the Lev. 25: 29-34 restrictions on what may and what may not be sold in perpetuity.

8. Hammurabi 118-119 provide restrictions on the redemption of slaves. These compare with the Lev. 25:50-54 guidelines on slavery redemption.

9. Hammurabi 178-181 provide restrictions on the sales of inherited land, showing a strong desire to keep such land intact. This compares with Lev. 25:13 where land reverts to the original owners, keeping family tracts intact, and also with Lev. 25:25 where a family member is to redeem land in danger of being sold outside the family, thus keeping it within the family's possession.

c) The Nuzi Codes

The Nuzi codes are dated somewhat later than the Code of Hammurabi. They contain references to slaves who under certain conditions were able to end their slavery, reflecting a parallel to Ex. 21:2 and to Deut. 15:12. The codes also had an adoption rule which was nothing more than a form of legal trickery whereby the seller "adopted" the buyer. This permitted the sale to go through while still observing the legal restrictions of keeping the property which is being sold within the family.[1]

The term andurârru occurs frequently in the Nuzi tablets. C.H. Gordon has attempted to connect this word with the Hebrew derōr (freedom), by adding the prefix an. In the Old Testament derōr is used with reference to both the sabbath and jubilee years.[2] Gordon associated derōr with the Nuzi word šudūtu which appears more frequently and which he saw as having

---

[1] North, Sociology, p. 62.

[2] derōr appears in Lev. 25:10; Isa. 61:1; Jer. 34:8,15,17,17; and Ezek. 46:17.

a close similarity to šemiṭṭāh. Since both anduraru and šudûtu designate a date after which a contract is to take place, it is proposed that šudûtu refers to the sabbath year and anduraru refers to the jubilee. The former word also occurs much more frequently, and thus Gordon makes the sabbath/jubilee comparison.[1]

An additional element from the Nuzi texts is the reference to a usable pledge which is transferred to the lender upon making a loan. No interest is charged for the loan, but the lender has the use of the item which is pledged, so that the benefit derived from it takes the place of interest. This parallels the interest-free regulations among the Hebrews (Lev. 25:36) as well as the return of property at the jubilee.[2]

d) Egypt

An Egyptian custom is reflected in Gen. 47:20ff, where Joseph took advantage of the famine to buy up land for the Pharaoh. It is noted (47:22) that he did not buy priestly lands because they were under special allowance from the Pharaoh. This practice may lie behind the Lev. 25:32-34 regulations where certain lands could not be sold because of rights given to the Levites.

e) Armenia

A 12th Century Armenian code explicitly states its connection with the jubilee, even using the word. It gives the only recorded place where the jubilee was ever actually observed. However, an adaptation was made. The fifty year period was modified to make a seven year land redemption cycle.[3]

---

[1] C.H. Gordon, "Biblical Customs and the Nuzi Tablets", Biblical Archaeologist 3 (1940), p. 12

[2] Edward Chiera, Joint Expedition with the Iraq Museum at Nuzi: 3. Exchange and Security Documents, (Paris: Geuthner, 1931), p. 5.

[3] Ginzberg, p. 399.

6. Conclusions

Our study of the origin of the jubilee has identified two possible times for its origin, as well as several possible links with other codes. Examination shows that these are not mutually exclusive nor irreconcilable in scope. Those advocating an exilic origin see the editor compiling and adapting laws from Israel's history with the hope of restoring her previous standing before God. The concepts which were used in the development of the jubilee laws should be seen in their original form as dating back to the period of the Occupation. These laws had lapsed so completely that the editor re-introduced them as virtually new laws with only minor modifications. Their original form reflects the experience of Israel in Egypt and shows Israel's commitment never to allow the injustices of slavery to be felt among themselves. Laws such as these would need to have been written and accepted before an extensive disparity of wealth and land ownership had developed among the people.

These original laws were quite primitive, covering simply the fallow year for the land (vv. 3-4a); the fiftieth year jubilee celebration (which in actual observance was the forty-ninth year) (vv. 8-10); and the four "if your brother becomes poor" statements of v. 25 (kinsman redemption of property); v. 35 (charging of interest); v. 39 (treatment and release of slaves); and v. 47 (kinsman redemption of a fellow Israelite).

The original primitive laws were affected by several distinct elements: 1) Israel did not live in a vacuum. They were influenced by the patterns and legal practices of the people living around them. Their contact was not a direct borrowing from the Code of Hammurabi, but more likely the two codes represent parallel traditions which had common sources. The similarities are more in concept and principle than in language, thus direct borrowing is doubtful. 2) The Israelite Code was

deeply influenced by Israel's own history, especially the experience of hunger and slavery in Egypt. 3) Israel's concepts of God which emerged from her experiences were used to provide foundation for the laws as well as motivation for obedience.

These three elements: God, historical experience and environment, can be seen shaping the laws of Israel as they came into the Promised Land. The many later additions and revisions reflected the continuing attempts of religious leaders to adjust the laws in order to gain wider acceptance. But it must be admitted that the basic elements of jubilee never became an integral part of the Hebrew way of life.

B. THE JUBILEE LAWS IN LEVITICUS

The basic content of the jubilee regulations is fourfold: the fallow year; the release of slaves; the redemption of land; and the cancellation of debts. Debt cancellation is not included in the Leviticus code, but it is recorded in the Deuteronomic code of sabbath year observance. It has already been shown that the jubilee coincided with the sabbath year, so that the sabbath year regulations will now be treated as jubilee material.[1]

1. The Fallow Year

> "When you come into the land which I give you, the land shall keep a sabbath to the Lord. Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather in its fruits; but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath to the Lord; you shall not sow your field nor prune your vineyard. What grows of itself in your harvest you shall not

---

[1] The regulations are identical as far as they go. The jubilee added to the sabbath year the element of land restitution.

> reap, and the grapes of your undressed vine you shall not gather; it shall be a year of solemn rest for the land. The sabbath of the land shall provide food for you, for yourself and for your male and female slaves and for your hired servant and the sojourner who lives with you; for your cattle also and for the beasts that are in your field its yield shall be for food."
> Lev. 25:2-7

The basic instructions are simple, but there are immediate problems. There is the question of whether the fallow field is applied individually to each field or simultaneously to all fields. What is to be done with the volunteer crops which grow in the seventh year? How is the reference to the sixth, eighth and ninth year to be explained (vv. 21-22)? Is the sabbath year intended as a cultic experience, or simply as a humanitarian gesture towards the poor?

a) An Individual or Simultaneous Year?

The issue of a rotating, individual seventh year as opposed to a universal, simultaneous year is a matter of much discussion. The concept of a rotating fallow year which is determined field by field has broad support. It is argued that an individually determined year would eliminate an economic problem. The farmer's entire acreage was not required to rest all at one time, so that his livelihood was permitted to go on in an uninterrupted manner.[1]

Ginzberg notes the problem of determining exactly when the sabbath year should be observed, since the Promised Land had not been conquered all in the same year. He also maintains that with a population of 200 persons per square mile, a universal fallow would lead to starvation in less than eight months.[2]

---

[1] G. Hartford-Battersby, "Sabbatical Year", HDB, 1902; Rudolf Killian, "Literarkritische und Formgeschichtliche Untersuchung des Heiligkeitsgesetzes" in BBB (Bonn: Hanstein, 1963), pp. 131-132; Porter, p. 198.

[2] Ginzberg, p. 361

Against this reasoning, several things need to be noted which strongly favour the universal observance of the sabbath year fallow:

1) The sabbath day was universally observed. It was not permitted to rotate among particular days. The sabbath year had strong ties with the sabbath day and suggests a similar observance.[1]

2) The calculation of the jubilee year as the seventh sabbath year would be totally chaotic if each owner determined his own sabbath year schedule. Encyclopedia Judaica indicates that the sabbath year observance began only after all the tribes were in possession of the land, thus supporting a standard, universal observance.[2]

3) The question asked in v. 20, "what shall we eat . . .?" as well as the discussion which follows, becomes meaningless if the landowner is farming 6/7th of his land every year. The question is based on a fear of having no food at all due to having all the land lying fallow.

4) A particular sabbath year observance would militate against the release of slaves. Paton, in connecting land release and slave release says:

> "When the sabbath year came, the owner could not farm his land, thus he would have no use for the labour of his slave, yet he would have to support him in his idleness. This is an added incentive to let the slave go free."[3]

If the owner were farming 6/7ths of the land every year, the seventh year would be no different from any other year and there would never be any economic incentive to free the slave.

5) Later references to the fallow year in I and II Maccabees and in

---

[1] Wacholder, "Calendar", p. 158.

[2] Shmuel Safrai, "Sabbath Year and Jubilee", Encyclopedia Judaica, C. Roth, ed. (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971). Also Judah David Eisenstein, "Sabbath Year and Jubilee", The Jewish Encyclopedia, I Singer, ed. (London: Funk and Wagnalls, 1905).

[3] Paton, p. 55.

Josephus indicate times of hunger and general food shortages. This would not be the case if only 1/7th of the land was out of production. It is very unlikely that a particular observance would transfer itself to a universal observance, especially with the economic factors that would be involved.[1]

Thus, it is our conclusion that the fallow year was observed in a simultaneous manner across the land. How faithfully this observance was carried out will be examined in a later section.

b) Spontaneous Growth or Stored Food?

A second issue raised by the text is found in vv. 20-22:

> "And if you say, 'What shall we eat in the seventh year, if we may not sow or gather our crop?' I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, so that it will bring forth fruit for three years. When you sow in the eighth year, you will be eating old produce; until the ninth year, when its produce comes in, you shall eat the old."

These verses are a later insertion into the text. The sense is best determined by linking v. 19 "the land will yield its fruit, and you shall eat your fill, and dwell in it securely" with v. 23 "the land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine . . . ." Both speak of security on the land. It is into this security that a later redactor inserts the question of food during the fallow year. Morgenstern insists that this cannot be original Holiness Code legislation, and he assigns these verses to the P_2 redactor. He also notes a change in how the year is calculated in vv. 20-22. This is obviously an autumn cycle, while vv. 4-5 refer to a spring year cycle.[2]

---

[1] Morgenstern says that Dt. 15 tries to nationalize the sabbath year to provide simultaneous observance. "Supplementary Studies in the Calendars of Ancient Israel", HUCA 10 (1935), p. 88.

[2] ibid. He believes that this redactor also wrote Ex. 16:4-34, which promises that on the 6th day, God will give enough food for the 6th and 7th days. The theology is identical, thus he believes it must be the same person.

Lev. 25:5 and 11 indicate that the people of Israel are not to reap (qâṣar) or gather (bâṣar). But in each case, the next verse indicates that the fruit of the field is to be eaten for food. Yet in v. 22 it says that during the sabbath year the people will be eating old produce from the abundant sixth year.

Snaith explains the difficulty by allowing no gathering of the harvest, but the sâpiâḥ (wild, spontaneous growth) which sprang freely from the droppings of the previous year's harvest, could be used for food.[1] Hartford-Battersby follows the same argument, adding that the purpose was to prohibit commercial gathering and marketing of the crops. Any spontaneous growth could be used for food.[2] This interpretation is supported by Brown-Driver-Briggs as they derive sâpiâḥ from sâpâḥ, meaning 'to pour out'. They explain that this growth comes from grain accidentally spilled (poured out) during the previous year's harvesting.[3]

North notes the use of bâṣar (v. 5) giving a different approach. Usually translated "to cut" or "to gather", North says that this meaning is not suitable for this text, because it clearly says that the owner may pick his own grapes for his own immediate use. North prefers "to make inaccessible", meaning that the owner is not permitted to make his vineyard inaccessible to the poor. Rather, they are permitted to come, to cut grapes and to make their own wine during the sabbath year.[4]

---

[1] Snaith, Leviticus and Numbers, NCB (London: Nelson, 1967), p. 162; also Noth, Leviticus, p. 187.

[2] Hartford-Battersby, p. 324

[3] F. Brown, S.R. Driver, C. Briggs, Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1906), p. 705.

[4] North, Sociology, p. 115n.

The issue is confused on two points by Ginzberg. He moves the sabbath year observance forward so that it begins before the harvest, but yet he permits reaping what was sown the previous year. He argues that they were permitted to harvest the crop during the sabbath year, but were not permitted to plant a new crop. He further reasons that the writer, in his attempt to retain humanitarian concern, adjusted the regulations to permit the owner and those living with him to eat the fruit of the land for daily food.[1]

It is our conclusion that the spontaneous growth of the seventh year was to be used for daily food by anyone who needed it. During the seventh year the spontaneous growth of the fields belonged to everyone. The crop was not to be harvested commercially, but the poor were permitted to join with the owners in gathering for their own food. Harvesting methods of the day were such that relatively substantial spontaneous growth would be found in the seventh year, providing a somewhat limited, but normally adequate supply of basic daily food.

c) Spring or Autumn Yearly Cycle?

How was the sabbath year calculated? Did it begin with a spring or an autumn date? If the sabbath year is one year, how does one explain the eighth and ninth year references in Lev. 25:20-22?

Hartford-Battersby argues that after a fallow year the ground is so hard that a second and sometimes even a third ploughing is needed in the eighth year before any sowing can be done. Only crops sown in the summer of the eighth year will bear any fruit.[2]

---

[1] Ginzberg, p. 355. But humanitarian concern would speak of food for the poor, not simply of food for the owner and his family.

[2] Hartford-Battersby, p. 324. So also A. Dillmann, Der Prophet Jesaia, (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1890), p. 328.

Heinisch sees the three year reference as an hyperbole designed to reassure the doubters of v. 20. The sixth year harvest will be so abundant that it will far exceed the needs even for a year beyond what is needed. He also notes that it could be a general reference to one autumn year that catches up in itself both the preceding and the following years.[1]

Snaith explains the counting as due to a pre-exilic rule with its autumn New Year being copied into the text without proper consideration for the post-exilic change to a spring New Year.[2] Noth has also seen this as secondary reasoning, but observes that the usual crop had to suffice for two years, i.e., the regular crop year plus the fallow year. It also had to last until the new crop was planted and harvested. While in fact this was only two years, it would be quite simple to confuse it with a third year.[3]

Morgenstern provides the most logical explanation for the confusion. He agrees that the problem is caused by the fusion of two different methods of calculation of the yearly cycle. He gives the following chart:[4]

	Autumn Yearly Cycle	Spring Yearly Cycle
	Autumn --- Spring	Spring --- Autumn
5th year	sowing ----- reaping	reaping --- sowing
6th year	sowing ----- reaping	reaping --- --
7th year	-- ----- --	-- --- --
8th year	sowing ----- reaping	-- --- sowing
9th year	sowing ----- reaping	reaping --- sowing

---

[1] Heinisch, p. 112, so also Strack, p. 539.

[2] Snaith, p. 164, so also Bernardus Eerdmans, Alttestamentliche Studien 4, Das Buch Leviticus, (Giessen: Töpelmann, 1912), p. 123.

[3] Noth, Leviticus, p. 188. But in every year, the people eat last year's crop while this year's crop is growing. He should rather say that the 6th year crop which grew while the people were eating from the 5th year crop had to last for both the 7th and 8th years. He has the right idea, but applies it to the wrong years.

[4] Morgenstern, "Supplementary Studies", pp. 85-86.

This shows that the Spring year cycle would have no crops sown in the sixth year because the people knew that they could not be harvested during the seventh (fallow) year. No crops were sown or harvested in the seventh year because it was the fallow year. But this also meant that when work began in the eighth year (the first year of the new sabbath cycle), there was no crop to harvest. Finally, in the autumn of the eighth year a new crop was planted, but it was the spring of the ninth year before the crop was ready for harvesting. This shows how the redactor, living within one method of calculating the year faced the problem of adapting material calculated upon a different method.

d) Humanitarian, Cultic or Land Orientated?

Whether the sabbath year observance was of humanitarian, cultic or agricultural origin is yet another disputed matter. Weber and Kugler each find the fallow year reflecting purely humanitarian interests.[1] Eichrodt supports this by calling attention to the overall humanitarian emphasis of the Holiness Code, referring explicitly to Lev. 19:9 where not only dropped grain, but also some standing grain was to be left for the benefit of the poor.[2]

North takes the position that the fallow year was primarily cultic in origin, not because the land lay fallow or labourers did not work, but as the owner sacrificed his claim to the produce of the land, releasing it for the benefit of the poor, he was in effect worshipping God by making this sacrifice. North admits that a cultic observance would be more effective if it were observed simultaneously, but he sidesteps the problem which he has created for himself by saying that the fallow year (and the

---

[1] Max Weber, "Agrarverhältnisse im Altertum" in Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Sozial-und Wirtschaftsgeschichte, (Tübingen: Mohr, 1924), p. 86. Kugler, p. 44.

[2] Eichrodt, "Religionsgeschichte", p. 430.

jubilee) should be seen as quasi-sacraments of charity, assuming that God is worshipped best by any arrangement which benefits the poor.[1]

Pedersen notes the close association of the people with the land, even to the point of believing that the soil and rocks have a nature which makes itself felt and demands respect.[2] The concept of the fallow year is so that the earth can have a time of freedom, not being "subject" to the "foreign" will of men, but being left to its own nature.[3]

e) Conclusions

It is our conclusion that the fallow year was a universally observed celebration which included one full planting-harvesting cycle. During that year the spontaneous growth of the fields was left for public use with the poor having free access to the fields and vineyards. Land owners were able to store some grain from the sixth year harvest, thus giving them sufficient food and seed grain when supplemented by the spontaneous growth of the seventh year.

The fallow year was primarily a humanitarian celebration. The concept of God's ownership of the land was used to encourage obedience. This also had the agricultural side benefit of prohibiting continuous cultivation which would have ruined the land.

2. The Release of Slaves

A second element of the jubilee law was the release of slaves. The text describes how slaves are to be treated---with kindness, as a hired

---

[1]North, Sociology, p. 119. North is an advocate of the individually determined fallow field!

[2]Job 31:38; Lk 19:40; Rom. 8:19-22

[3]Johannes Pedersen, Israel, Its Life and Culture I, (London: Milford, 1926), p. 479.

servant, not with harshness (39-40a, 43, 50c, 53). It also gives the terms for their release (40b-41). Instructions are included regarding foreign slaves (44-46), as well as what should be done if an Israelite is sold to a stranger or sojourner (47-55).

An immediate problem is that only the jubilee release is mentioned. Ginzberg explains this by saying that seven years is no longer the maximum term for slaves, since by this time everything else revolved around the new fifty year period. This is because the earlier Exodus and Deuteronomy regulations had been disregarded as far as the freeing of slaves was concerned. The author hoped that by using the fifty year period, it would be long enough to safeguard the property of the rich, yet retain the spirit of manumission.[1]

Paton ties the slave release to the principle of land redemption. This gives the newly freed slave some land to which he can return. To release the slave without giving him any land would be meaningless. He contends that this is a later addition, that originally the Holiness Code prescribed land release and slave release in the seventh year. His reasoning is that the Book of the Covenant describes a seven year slave release (Ex. 21:2) and that the Holiness Code normally reflects this code.[2]

S.R. Driver sees this as mitigation of Israelite slavery at a time when the seven year sabbath cycle had been neglected. The writer lengthens the term of service, but balances this with insistence upon humane treatment, seeing the slave always as a hired servant and not simply as property. Driver believes it is more appropriate to refer to free labour than to speak of actual slavery in Israel.[3]

---

[1] Ginzberg, p. 349.

[2] Paton, p. 54

[3] S.R. Driver, Deuteronomy, ICC (Edinburgh: Clark, 1902), p. 185.

This emphasis upon the humane treatment of slaves is unmistakable in the Leviticus regulations. But there is debate whether it is proper to assign the term "slave" to any Hebrew who was working for another Hebrew. The text of Lev. 25:39 presents some complexities: 1) The use of mâkar (to sell) is normally reserved for describing actual possessions. 2) There is an unusual triple construction (לֹא תַעֲבֹד בּוֹ עֲבֹדַת עָבֶד) literally "thous shalt not work with him the work of a worker". This can be either an emphatic reference to a slave type relationship, or it can be interpreted to mean that no Israelite may work for another Israelite. 3) The ĕbĕd relationship is compared to the śâkîr and tōśāb relationships. But there is a distinct emphasis upon the idea that the Israelite never served as anything lower than a wage earner (even though in actual fact he may have received no wages).[1]

Fuchs finds it possible on this basis to say "The Israelite was never a slave . . . but he sometimes lost his liberty".[2] Buhl interprets this to mean that an Israelite could not be sold, only rented for a period of from one to forty-nine years. He stresses the parallel between the slave and the land.[3]

A very different approach is taken by North. He says that the fifty year slave law is not a repeal of the seven year term, nor is it independent of it, but rather it is an extension of the seven year term to secure more effective and more humane operation of its basic principles. In this seventh year the disenfranchised serf, working on his own land under the

---

[1] North, Sociology, p. 136

[2] K. Fuchs, Die Alttestamentliche Arbeitergesetzgebung im Vergleich zu Codex Hammurabi, zum altassyrischen und hethitischen Recht (Heidelberg: Evangelischer Verlag, 1935), p. 15.

[3] F. Buhl, "Social Institutions of the Israelites", AJT 1 (1897), p. 737.

direction of an absentee landlord, was to have full control over the produce of the land. If, during this seventh year, he could earn enough money to pay off the debt, or at least prove that he could succeed and pay off the debt in the near future, he could regain control of his land. If he could not do this, he was to commit himself to a life of slavery. The jubilee release then made a festive celebration of something already demanded by simple human decency; that after up to fifty years of service, the slave could retire peacefully with his family, or be cared for by his owner.[1]

A connection between the jubilee manumission and war is seen by Weber. He contends that only free-born property-owning citizens can be trusted to fight in defense of the country. The jubilee manumission therefore served to provide recruits for the military. He pursues this even to the point of referring to the expression Šenat rason (year of grace) in Isa. 61:2 as a conscription parole. Whenever the army is dependent upon the self-armed free landowner, possession of one's own land is a matter of national defense.[2]

Our conclusion is that the jubilee slave release is a later attempt by a redactor to recover the slave release law which originally had been a seven year release, but had fallen into total neglect. The redactor hoped that by making it a fifty year release, it would have a better chance of acceptance.

---

[1] North, Sociology, p. 157.

[2] Max Weber, "Wirtschaftsethik der Weltreligionen" in Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie 3. Das Antike Judentum (Tübingen: Mohr, 1921), pp. 78-80. Abram Menes, Die Vorexilischen Gesetze Israels BZAW 50 (1928), p. 82 pursues a slightly different approach to this same theme, claiming that only free property owners could take part in the law-making assembly. The slave release was intended as preparation for the reading of the law.

3. Land Restitution

The restitution of property to the original owners stands as the one distinctive feature of the jubilee over against the sabbath year. It is found only here, whereas the other elements of the law are found in other places as part of other codes. But land restitution with its emphasis upon homecoming receives substantial attention in Lev. 25. Six items are listed:

1) The freehold of agricultural land could not be sold outright. Instead, only leases of the land could be granted (v. 23).

2) When a man was forced to sell his patrimony, it was the duty of a kinsman to exercise the right of redemption (v. 25).

3) If there was no kinsman, the original owner could buy back the land as the price declined due to the approach of the year of jubilee (v. 26ff).

4) Property in a walled city could be sold outright with no redemption at the jubilee. The seller had one year in which to exercise the right of redemption (v. 29).

5) Houses in villages were treated as part of the agricultural land surrounding the village (v. 31).

6) Special restrictions were applied to property controlled by the Levites (v. 32f).

Ginzberg feels that these regulations were part of the general trend towards monotheism by exilic and post-exilic Judaism. The absoluteness of God was extended until it included every aspect of life. From this, it was a simple step to posit God as sole owner of the land.

Ginzberg goes on to say that in pre-exilic times there was a conscious feeling of the supremacy and omnipotence of God. Slaves and animals were treated kindly because they also were God's creatures. The earth came

to be included under this control of God. In later years it was almost personified so that sabbath laws dictated its rest, just as man needed his rest. This concept fitted very well into the plans of the author of the jubilee regulations as he wanted to make land transfer more difficult. Recognizing this religious trend among the exiles, he gave substance to it by including God's ownership of the land in his basic principles.[1]

Wilkie builds his case for God's ownership on the fact that the Hebrews had conquered the land under Yahweh's command, so that it was a natural step for the ancient mind to conclude that Yahweh was now the "Landesherr" in Palestine.[2]

Trocmé claims that this is in contrast to the surrounding lands, where the sovereign is owner of the land and can give it to whomever he chooses. The writer here limits the power to accumulate wealth by having a regulated land redistribution every forty-nine years. Thus God is presented as the owner, yet he does not oppress his people, nor does he allow them to oppress each other. Rather, he entrusts his servants to administer his goods, calling them to account at regular intervals and then starting the cycle anew.[3]

Paton believes that there was some form of land release in the original Holiness Code legislation. He gives the following reasons:

---

[1] Ginzberg, pp. 379-380.

[2] Fritz Wilkie, "Sozialismus im Hebräischen Altertum" in Religion und Sozialismus, (Berlin: Runge, 1921), p. 19. But T. Meek, Hebrew Origins (New York: Harper, 1950), 2nd ed., p. 29 presents the hypothesis that not all the tribes went to Egypt with Jacob, so that the conquest of Canaan was more a returning home than a conquest.

[3] A. Trocmé, pp. 34-35. We do not see the distinction so clearly as does Trocmé. There is a simple connection between the earthly sovereign owning the land in other countries and having Israel designate God as the sovereign owner of their land. In each case the sovereign owns the land. The distinction is in how Israel understood the nature of their sovereign.

1) The position of the jubilee legislation immediately after the sacred seasons and the sabbatical year must be intended to show some connection with these seasons. The release of both land and slave must originally have coincided with one of the sacred seasons.

2) The fact that the legislation is included here indicates that there is some adaptation from an earlier code which would have included similar concepts. If the Holiness Code had provided for a release, it would have been natural for the priestly redactor to have made the insertion at this location in his new code. If the earlier Holiness Code included only general prohibitions of injustice, it is difficult to see how the land release insertion would have been placed here.

3) The unqualified law of Lev. 25:23 (which Paton sees as having a Holiness Code origin) requires the land release. Unless provision for some form of land release were made, the retention of land by the new (temporary) owner would result, due to the perpetual poverty of the original owner.

4) The laws in vv. 35-38 do not refer to poverty in general, but specifically to those who have lost their land. These verses describe how people in this predicament are to be treated by other Israelites. They are not to be seen as persons who have sunk to a lower class, but only as people in need of temporary help. The inclusion of a land release law prohibits the formation of a permanently dependent class of people. Although this legislation does not speak explicitly of land release, it does imply that such a release existed.

5) The slave release laws came from the oldest Hebrew legislation. But the release of the slave without the release of his patrimony would only create a pauper class. The independence of the individual could be preserved only by restoring him to the position which he had held before he was compelled to sell first his land, then himself.

For these reasons, Paton concludes that the Holiness Code contained the land release, and that a later editor then substituted a fifty year land release clause for the earlier seven year provision.[1]

Within the jubilee law itself, several specific considerations for land restitution are given. One of these explains the procedure to be used. Lev. 25:25 indicates that if property is in danger of being lost to the family, a kinsman who has the resources is expected to redeem it. What this gō'ēl[2] does with the property is not clearly defined. Noth says that the gō'ēl did not retain the land for himself, but was obliged to return it immediately to the original owner. He also says that if there was no gō'ēl, the land would decrease in value year by year as the jubilee approached, so that after several years, the original owner could buy it back again.[3]

Buhl, however, sees the gō'ēl acting on behalf of the community rather than just the individual. The gō'ēl does not buy the land in order to return it to the impoverished original seller. Rather, he holds it in trust for the family/community. The land returns to the original owner only by repurchase or by the coming of the jubilee.[4]

Pedersen takes a psychological approach to the issue. He sees the

---

[1] Paton, pp. 52-53.

[2] revenger, kinsman helper, often translated redeemer. For a study of gō'ēl, see Helmer Ringgren, גאל in Theologisches Wörterbuch zum alten Testament I (Berlin: Kohlhammer, 1973), pp. 884-890. According to Jewish law, the kinsman was defined as a near relative (brother, cousin, uncle, etc.). The original duties were to avenge the family of a murder by an outsider. gō'ēl was later expanded in meaning to become not only avenger but also redeemer, Ruth 3 & 4, Jer. 32:7. The term is used often in Isaiah, where God is the gō'ēl who will redeem Palestine.

[3] Noth, Leviticus, p. 189.

[4] Buhl, p. 734-738.

gō'ēl acting from a natural expression of family feeling. The law contains no sentimental regulations that the kinsman ought to assist the needy relative by returning the property to him. If the person cannot manage the property, he loses it. In Jer. 32:6-11 the cousin loses the property to Jeremiah who exercises the right of redemption. There is no mention of helping the cousin. By contrast, the jubilee land restoration principle works to preserve the property for the original owner whether he is worthy or not.[1]

Ginzberg correctly notes that the whole purpose of the gō'ēl is to maintain family solidarity by keeping the property within the broad outlines of the family. The writer, using the gō'ēl principle for the first time in this way, is hoping that it will mitigate some unfortunate conditions in land transfer and ownership.[2]

The second special regulation deals with the transfer of property within a walled city. There is a sharp distinction made between a walled city (v. 29) and a village without a wall (v. 31). Within a walled city, property was sold without considering the jubilee restoration. It was possible to redeem such property within one year of the selling date; after that it was considered to be a sale in perpetuity.[3]

This walled city regulation is regarded by Sulzberger as a later redaction. He holds that the original practice of inalienability was

---

[1] Pedersen, pp. 83-88.

[2] Ginzberg, p. 375. The Babylonian Talmud (Baba Mezia 108ab) has a much later provision that if land is to be sold, the next door neighbour has first right of redemption. This reflects an assumption that related families were living side by side. It served the same purpose as the gō'ēl.

[3] Noth, Leviticus, p. 190 asks whether the year was the remainder of the calendar year or a full year. The Mishnah (Arakhin 9:4) specifically states twelve months, adding that any intercalated month is included. See Danby, The Mishnah (Oxford: Clarendon, 1933), p. 533.

adapted so that the nobility could purchase city property in perpetuity, since the economics of city property are different from those of rural land.[1]

Ginzberg agrees, seeing the compromise as being aimed at the rich, in order to placate them and to gain their support. City property was specifically excluded because it was used for commercial speculation.[2]

Snaith also agrees that this was a later modification, but explains the reason for it as being the difficulty in enforcing the original regulations within the cities. Growing urbanization demanded a change, so in order to ensure obedience, the changes were made.[3]

A third regulation affected the sale and redemption of Levitical property. Houses in Levitical cities could be redeemed at any time, and they were always controlled by the jubilee restoration. The Levitical fields could not be sold. This gives a rather conspicuous prominence and advantage to the Levites. North regards this as Levitical preference. He believes it came from a later era in which the Levites had become wealthy, and had lost their special status and influence which tradition had given them. In order to protect the ancient Levitical rights, these special considerations were written into the law.[4]

---

[1] Mayer Sulzberger, "The Polity of the Ancient Hebrews", JQR 3 (1912) p. 75

[2] Ginzberg, p. 390. The Mishnah (Arakhin 9:4) gives a later provision by Hillel for the redemption of city houses. Purchasers had been hiding from the original owners as the end of the year approached, in order to prevent them from redeeming their property. Hillel ordained that the purchase money could be deposited in the Temple, and this would constitute a legitimate redemption. Danby, p. 553.

[3] Snaith, p. 165

[4] North, Sociology, p. 170. The problem was that the Levites had originally been poor, supported only by tithes. But they had become rich through the control of dedicated estates, so they rewrote the law to protect themselves in their new standard of living.

Verse 33 presents one of the few textual problems in this chapter. The verse reads "and what one redeems (yig'al) from among the Levites, shall also go out in the jubilee." The text has the problem of logic. If the property had been redeemed, then there is no need to restore it at the jubilee. Another possible meaning would be that one has bought something from the Levites, and at the time of jubilee it returns to them. Gispen says that every purchase from a Levite was in essence a "buying back" (gā'al) because the buyer's tribe had originally granted the property to the Levites.[1] Ehrlich reads a Niphal (so that yig'al becomes yiggā'ēl) and then he interprets it modally, meaning "what is redeemable".[2] The Vulgate reads "Si redemptae non fuerint" thus presupposing an original negative in the MT. This rendering is followed by Quell in both BHK and BHS.[3]

Our conclusions are that the land restoration was part of the primitive jubilee regulations as recorded in Lev. 25:10. This regulation was a reaction to their experience in Egypt where for years they had been without land. But by the time the first fifty years had passed, the law was not enforced, and it became just another item in the legal code.

The fifty year period, when compared with the seven year cycle, seems like a very long time, but two factors need to be considered. First, it would be unusual for a farmer to lose his land in the first years after the jubilee. It is more likely that this would happen in the middle or later years, so that the time between the loss of the land and the jubilee

---

[1] W.H. Gispen, Het Boek Leviticus Verklaard (Kampen: Kok, 1950), p. 363. See Num. 35:2-8 for this original transaction giving property to the Levites.

[2] Arnold B. Ehrlich, Randglossen zur Hebräischen Bibel vol. II (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1909), p. 93.

[3] Biblia Hebraica (BHK) and Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (BHS) both of Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt.

restoration might more likely be twenty-five or thirty years. Second, this figure would correspond more nearly to the period of time when a man was head of his own land, thus while it does not promise much of a second chance for the man himself, it does ensure that his children (sons) would not be burdened with the plight of slavery, but could make an independent start for themselves. Land restoration should be seen not so much as redemption for the person as it is redemption for the family.

The many additions to the law (gō'ēl, walled city exemptions, Levitical lands, etc.) are all reflections of changing conditions and are attempts to bring the law into harmony with existing practices. But for all practical purposes, the land restoration regulations of the jubilee were never enforced.

4. The Release of Debts

The release of debts is not specifically mentioned in Lev. 25, but it is included in the jubilee text of Deut. 15. Since it is so clearly part of the sabbath year cycle regulations, and since we have already shown how the jubilee coincided with the sabbath year observances, it is appropriate to include debt release at this point in our study.

This decision is validated by North as he says that the nucleus of the jubilee law deals with bankruptcy practices.[1] Although not specifically stated in "debt terminology", the implication of debt runs throughout the Lev. 25 laws. Noth takes the same approach, observing that each section begins with the conditional clause "if your brother becomes poor (vv. 25a, 35a, 39, cf also 47a).[2]

---

[1] North, Sociology, p. 187.

[2] Noth, Leviticus, p. 189.

The Deuteronomy text dealing with debt release is found in 15:1-11. Only the first three verses are quoted here, as vv. 4-11 provide additional explanatory material for these first verses.

> "At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release. And this is the manner of the release: every creditor shall release what he has lent to his neighbour; he shall not exact it from his neighbour, his brother, because the Lord's release has been proclaimed. Of a foreigner you may exact it; but whatever of yours is with your brother your hand shall release."

Von Rad makes the connection between the debt release and the basic principles of the fallow year. Peasants often had to borrow in order to survive certain crises, and then when the fallow year came, they had to bear the burden alone while the economy continued on without interruption. The debt release (šemittah) was a later addition intended to improve these circumstances. It was done by extending the release of slaves and land to include the release of money. The rule which was laid down clearly originated in a different period from that of the ancient maxim which preceded it.[1]

For our study, the critical question is the nature of the release. Should it be seen as a total cancellation of debts, or simply a suspension of payment for one year? The Mishnah Shebiith 10:1 is very explicit on this point: "The Seventh year cancels any loan . . . ."[2]

Bückers regards the cancellation as affecting that portion of the debt which had not been paid within the six year period. He assumes that all debts were paid within six years, so that if the debtor had not paid in full, it was a sign that he was incapable of paying.[3]

---

[1] Von Rad, Deuteronomy (London: SCM, 1966), p. 106.

[2] Danby, p. 50. Goods purchased from a shopkeeper on credit, fines and court enjoined payments had to be repaid.

[3] H. Bückers, Die Sozialen Grundideen der alttestamentlichen Gesetze und Einrichtungen, (Freiburg: Thomas, 1953), p. 84.

North observes that if the loan were cancelled in the seventh year, and no interest were collected during the first six years, then it should be seen as a free gift from the start and not called a loan at all.[1] Von Rad sees v. 9 as supporting complete cancellation, with the verse being an addition to prod the wealthy into making the needed loans.[2] Ginzberg says that this should be seen in the full radical spirit of total cancellation. Since the law applied only to Hebrews borrowing from other Hebrews, payment from non-Hebrews could be exacted on schedule (Deut. 15:3). In all probability, Ginzberg says, the effect on the economy was not as drastic as might be expected. He places the origin of this debt release in the legislator's concern to apply the humanitarian measures of an agrarian economy to the expanding commercial economy.[3]

Suspension of the debt for only one year is supported by the analogy of the farmer surrendering the produce of his land for one year. Here the creditor surrenders the benefit of the loan for the same period of one year.[4]

Menes points out that charging interest was not permitted, and for suspension to be considered, it assumes that interest was being charged. He suggests that instead of interest, the deposit of a pledge was made. The creditor received and used the pledge while the loan was in force. By the end of the given period (six years?) the creditor had profited sufficiently from the pledge that he could cancel the debt without

---

[1] North, Sociology, p. 186. The distinction between North and Bückers seems to be that North assumes there would be no regular payment on the loan, while Bückers sees an annual payment being made.

[2] Von Rad, p. 106.

[3] Ginzberg, p. 358.

[4] Driver, p. 179 follows this one year remission concept. However, he admits that the term Šemittah favours full remission.

suffering great economic loss. At the same time, the pledge (perhaps a field?) was returned to the debtor.[1]

North develops his argument along these same lines, but uses a more complicated philological base. Yasseh (Dt. 15:2 from nassah) does not mean precisely "to lend", but rather "to snatch on occasion of a loan". He also contends that masseh is not the loan itself, but the pledge or deposit which is the instrument to secure the loan. Ba'al is not the fundamental owner of the property which has been loaned, but refers to the temporary holder of the deposit. Yad is not the wealth of the lender which is made available to the one who borrows, but is the temporary control which the lender exercises over the property of the debtor. Thus what happens in the seventh year is not a release of the debt itself, but a release of the property used to secure the loan.[2]

North and Menes each present well founded arguments and only minor adjustments are needed for their basic acceptance. Both imply that the creditor recovers the loan by farming the debtor's field which had been given to him as a pledge. The concept of suspension could be well satisfied by having the creditor "forgive" or "release" one year's payment on the loan. The debtor farmer, during the seventh year when he had no produce-income from his fields would make no payment on the loan, yet the amount of the loan would be decreased as though he had actually made the payment. On the following year, when his income returned, his payment schedule would resume as well. This does not involve the payment of interest (which was forbidden) and makes unnecessary the rather detailed and at times slightly forced redefinition of terms employed by North.

---

[1] Menes, "Vorexilischen", pp. 80-81.

[2] North, Sociology, p. 187. For a more complete discussion of North's redefinition of terms, see North, "Yad in Shemittah Law", VT 4 (1954), pp. 196-199.

In spite of the plausibility of the Menes/North arguments for suspension of the debt, the more acceptable answer, indicated by the text and its accompanying theology, is total cancellation. Šemiṭṭâh supports it, the analogy of the slaves supports it, the later development of Hillel's prozbul (to be discussed in our study of the Mishnah materials), indicates the precedent of complete cancellation. The loan would be made and repayment exacted as readily and completely as possible. What was not repaid by the šemiṭṭâh year was cancelled. The use of the pledge given over by the debtor was involved in determining the repayment schedule. The number of years remaining before the šemiṭṭâh year was also a determining factor.

Mackenzie is correct when he says that the šemiṭṭâh was not intended as a law for the regulation of commercial practice, but as a pressing exhortation to fraternal charity.[1]

5. Conclusions

We have shown that the jubilee had a very primitive origin, coming from the time just preceding the occupation of Palestine. It was a celebration which coincided with the observance of the seventh sabbath year and added the factor of land restitution to the normal sabbath year laws. These sabbath/jubilee laws were revised on several occasions, the most prominent being a revision by a priestly writer during the exile in an attempt to restore them to regular observance.

The fallow year was a simultaneous year of rest for the land based on humanitarian concern for the poor. Support for the observance of the regulations was encouraged by rooting them in theological concern.

---

[1] Roderick A.F. Mackenzie, Deuteronomy, A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture (London: Nelson, 1953), p. 216.

During this fallow year, the spontaneous growth of the fields was made available to the poor for food.

But the problem of insufficient food would not be felt during the seventh year, for during that year the people would be eating from the sixth year harvest. The food problem would not become critical until the eighth year because then they would have no seventh year harvest to eat while waiting for the new harvest to ripen. This means that the most critical period would be the months just prior to the eighth year harvest.

This has interesting implications for the worship of God. During the year given over to worship and study of the commandments (the sabbath year), the people would not explicitly feel the negative aspects of the fallow year. Thus the special attention given to God would not be hindered by any grumbling over the lack of food. When the hunger problem would be felt most acutely (in the eighth year), the growing grain and ripening vineyards would serve to remind the people that God was once again preparing to meet their needs. Because of this, the sabbath year worship could maintain the celebratory, joyful spirit that it was intended to have.

The other aspects of the jubilee received little specific attention. Slave release, land release, and debt release may have been observed on occasion by isolated individuals intent on strict obedience of the law, but there are no records indicating any unified, national observance.

The jubilee laws were included in the Jewish legal codes and were known and debated by religious leaders. The fact that for the most part they were not obeyed does not remove their validity or importance. As we shall see in a later chapter, it is precisely this laxity of obedience that Jesus picked up as a central theme in his ministry.

C. THE JUBILEE YEAR IN EXODUS AND DEUTERONOMY

1. Exodus

There are several references in Exodus which express similar themes when compared with the jubilee text in Leviticus. They are included in the Exodus section normally recognized as the Covenant Code. This code is the legal section (Ex. 20:23-26; 21:2-23:19) of the Book of the Covenant (20:22 - 23:33). These are the oldest of the laws in the Old Testament, coming from a pre-monarchical period, and reflecting a society that was primarily agrarian in nature.[1]

The placing of the Book of the Covenant material in Exodus is generally accepted to be the work of the Deuteronomic redactor. Original placement is felt by some to be in Joshua 24:26, "and Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God". But Hyatt objects, dismissing this as mere conjecture.[2]

A comparison of Exodus with the Leviticus laws reveals three basic sections:

a) Exodus 21:2-11 - the slave laws (compare Lev. 25:39-55)

The following contrasts can be noted:

1) The slave in Exodus worked for six years on an individually determined schedule of years before he was released (v. 2), while in Leviticus the term was fixed to the jubilee and was universal (25:54). The change in Leviticus reflects a later attempt by a redactor to gain jubilee support.

---

[1] J.P. Hyatt, Exodus NCB, (London: Oliphants, 1971), p. 218.

[2] Hyatt, p. 218; A Weiser, The Old Testament, Its Formation and Development, 4th ed. (New York: Association, 1968), pp. 83-90 places this material in Joshua 24. See Brevard Childs, Exodus (London: SCM, 1974), pp. 440-496 for discussion of the Covenant Code. He includes extensive bibliographical listings on pp. 440-442; 459; 464-488.

2) The relationship of the slave to his wife and children has changed. In Exodus, he must go out from his master in the same condition in which he came in (v. 3), while in Leviticus his children are to go out with him (v. 41 and v. 54). Childs explains that the cruel inconsistency of this law with the concept of marriage presented in Gen. 2:24 (a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife) led to the alteration of the law.[1]

3) The option of staying with the master is given. Leviticus, with its fiftieth year release, has no mention of this option. The procedure was that the slave went to the sanctuary and stated his intention before God. Then he returned to the house of his owner where his ear was pierced with an awl. Hyatt notes that while one could become a temporary slave involuntarily (through debt), it was only by free will that one could become a permanent slave. He explains the ear-piercing in a practical way; it was to receive a ring holding a tag denoting ownership.[2]

Childs refers to the Tosephta, Baba Kamma VII 5 for his explanation:

> "The ear which heard at Sinai 'you are my servants' but nevertheless preferred subjection to men rather than God deserves to be pierced."[3]

4) The slave, if he chose to stay with his master, did so for life (v. 6), while in Leviticus, the slave was to be released at the jubilee. Nothing is said about any end to the self-chosen slavery in Exodus. It was either for six years or for life.

---

[1] Childs, p. 468.

[2] Hyatt, p. 229. Driver, Deuteronomy, p. 211 says that it symbolized permanent attachment to the house of the owner.

[3] Childs, p. 469. M.J. Cohen, Pathways Through the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1946), p. 110 says that it was a sign of shame and cites this same Tosephta passage.

5) Only male slaves are mentioned in the six year release in Exodus. Verse 7 explicitly excluded a female slave from the release, but it did give several options for her treatment: a) If her master chose not to keep her for himself, she could not be sold to any other master, she was to be redeemed. b) She could be given to the master's son as a wife. c) But if another wife was taken, the master had to continue to fulfil responsibilities to the first wife. The law said that if he did not do these things, she was free to leave. The language implies that this decision had to be made at the end of the six year period.[1]

In Leviticus there is no mention of female Jewish slaves. The only reference to female slaves is in the discussion of foreign slaves (25:44, cf. Deut. 15:12).

6) Leviticus refers to "your brother" (v. 39 and v. 47) and makes a distinction between Jewish and foreign slaves. Exodus speaks of a "Hebrew slave" (v. 2). "Hebrew" (says Childs) was not an ethnic group, but a pejorative designation of a legal or social status. They were the disadvantaged peoples. This indicates that for a time at least they had accepted for themselves the term used for "outsider". But Childs believes that already here it had the more restrictive meaning of Israelite.[2] This contrast between Israelite and non-Israelite is developed in Leviticus, while here in Exodus there is no mention of foreign slaves.

b) Exodus 22:25-26 - The Prohibition of Interest (cf Lev. 25:35-38)

The prohibition of interest in Exodus is rooted in concern for the poor. This compares closely with Leviticus where interest is also prohibited, but there it is more closely tied to how God has treated

---

[1] Childs, p. 469.

[2] Childs, p. 468.

them (v. 36, "fear your God"; v. 38, "I am the Lord your God who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt to give you the land of Canaan"). Leviticus is a development of the simple Exodus statement, explaining that since God had given them the land, they also should be generous.[1]

Ex. 22:36 accepts the right of the lender to take a pledge when the loan is secured, but discourages the practice by making it very inconvenient. (It had to be returned every evening, implying that it might be a coat or blanket needed for sleeping.) The taking of a pledge is mentioned in other places (Dt. 24:17; Job 22:6; Prov. 20:16; Amos 2:8) and in each case it carries a negative connotation, expressing a form of disapproval of the practice.

c) Exodus 23:10-11 - The fallow year (cf. Lev. 25:2-7)

The seventh year fallow law is a brief elementary statement which is quite similar to the expanded Leviticus decree. There is a contrast in motivation, with Exodus stressing the humanitarian aspect of food for the poor and the animals (v. 11); while in Leviticus the emphasis is placed upon the theological base of a sabbath unto the Lord (v. 4). The Leviticus statement is expanded as it gives more attention to details and problems.[2]

2. Deuteronomy

Deut. 15 is seen by Lemche as being a combination of the Book of the Covenant and the sabbath year laws. Deut. 15:1 comes from Ex. 23:10,

---

[1] Hyatt, p. 243 notes that interest rates at this time could run as high as 50%. The Hammurabi Code 88 and 99 limited interest rates to 20% on grain. Mendelsohn, "Slavery in the Old Testament", IDB gives the average interest rates for the period as being 20 - 25% on silver, and 33⅓% on grains.

[2] Childs, p. 428; Hyatt, p. 247.

and Deut. 15:12 is from Ex. 21:2. The two were combined because in each case there was the use of the number seven.[1]

There are two elements to the laws of Deut. 15:1-18:[2]

a) The release of debts (vv. 1-11).

b) The release of slaves (vv. 12-18).

The elimination of any mention of the periodic land fallow is noted by Hartford-Battersby as evidence that the Israelites have passed beyond a purely agricultural stage.[3] Lemche sees confusion here between the fallow year and the debt release legislation. He says that the Deuteronomic writers understood the fallow year as being universal in scope, but they forgot that it was an agrarian concept. Using very similar language, they proceeded to interpret it as debt release.[4]

In comparing Deuteronomy with Leviticus, the following observations can be made:

a) Debt release, vv. 1-11

The release itself was included as part of the jubilee materials, and was discussed above (see pp. 43-46).

Driver says that the Deuteronomy law is a new application of the institution of the fallow year and the sabbath year. It is connected

---

[1] Lemche, pp. 44-45.

[2] Driver, Deuteronomy, p. 174 says that there are three laws in these verses (1-6; 7-11; 12-18), each intended to ameliorate the condition of the poor. We see the second section (7-11) as being very closely related to the first (vv. 1-6). This section speaks of generosity and could well have as its background the prohibition of interest. We accept with Driver that this had an element of independence as seen in the opening phrase "if there is among you a poor man". But we see its inclusion here not as a separate law (which at one time earlier it might have been), but as an elaboration of the previously stated release.

[3] Hartford-Battersby, p. 324.

[4] Lemche, p. 45.

to Exodus by the verb samat; the change being that in Exodus it refers to the land, while here in Deuteronomy the same principle is applied to debts.[1] As in Leviticus and Exodus, the law is restricted to Israelites. Treatment of the foreigner is not affected.

b) Slave Release, vv. 12-18

It is in the slave release law that more development is apparent. As in Exodus (and in contrast to Leviticus) the term of slavery is set at six years and is determined individually for each slave. Several significant changes are noted with regard to the release of the slave:

1) Deuteronomy instructs the owner to be liberal with the departing slave, and gives a theological basis for the liberality (God has blessed you. You were once a slave and God redeemed you. Vv. 14b-15). This is contrasted with Leviticus where there is no comment on being liberal, but the same theological base is given, that God had redeemed you from Egypt (Lev. 25:38,42,55).

2) Deuteronomy and Exodus have a similar phrase spoken by the slave in the ceremony of refusing to accept his freedom: Ex. 21:6 "I will not go free"; Deut. 15:12 "I will not go out from you". In each case a similar ceremony is described with minor differences of detail. But the end result is the same, the slave becomes a permanent slave.

3) There are minor changes in the procedures used to become a slave for life. In Exodus, the ceremony is public and official, while in Deuteronomy, it is done entirely at the home of the master, having a purely domestic character. Driver says that this change came about because judicial ceremony had fallen into disuse.[2]

4) Perhaps the most significant change is in the specific mention

---

[1] Driver, Deuteronomy, p. 177.

[2] Driver, Deuteronomy, p. 184.

of female slaves in Deuteronomy. Twice (v. 12 and v. 17) women are included where the other texts omit them. Ginzberg says that female slaves had been used previously as concubines, but with an increase in morality, laws began to develop which opposed the exploitation of women.[1] Driver notes various attempts to harmonize the Deuteronomy and Exodus statements on women, then says that Deuteronomy springs from a different and more advanced society. Equality of the sexes was increasing, so that the power of a father over his daughter was no longer as absolute as it once had been.[2]

North sees the change in Deuteronomy as being the work of the Pentateuch legislator, trying to conserve the ancient formulas. The old law is salvaged by making the addition that a slave cannot be sent away empty-handed, but must be given enough to start him off on an independent life. But v. 18 shows that this did not have unanimous approval from the wealthier owners. The law did not work, and North sees Leviticus as a further development in trying to reach a compromise that could be accepted.[3]

Driver says that the prospect held out here was an ideal one. The writer did not contemplate that it would ever be realized in actual practice. The principles given in Exodus were expanded to meet the requirements of a more highly developed society. The benefits were extended to a class who in the highly organized civic life were more in need of relief than those who had originally benefitted from the Exodus laws.[4]

---

[1] Ginzberg, p. 348.

[2] Driver, Deuteronomy, pp. 182-183.

[3] North, Sociology, p. 156.

[4] Driver, Deuteronomy, p. 178.

D. THE JUBILEE IN THE FORMER PROPHETS AND WRITINGS

We have shown that the jubilee theme was part of the Jewish legal codes as found in Lev. 25 and Deut. 15. But the extent to which these particular laws affected Jewish life needs to be examined. The mere existence of the laws does not mean that they were ever obeyed.[1] In fact, we found no evidence of any regular cyclical observance of the complete jubilee law concepts. But there is evidence indicating that certain aspects of the jubilee laws were followed in specific cases.

It is now our task to take each of the four basic themes of jubilee and to follow them individually through the Old Testament to determine what (if any) impact each had upon Jewish life. Because of the different setting and emphasis given to the themes in the latter prophets, that material will be treated separately in the following section.

1. The Fallow Year

The fallow year laws of Lev. 25 are followed immediately in Lev. 26 by a series of blessings which will come to Israel if they obey these laws. These blessings are accompanied by warnings of what will happen if the people do not obey. They are given in an attempt to

---

[1] Deut. 31:10-13 gives clear indication that the law would have been known. Instructions are given there for the reading of the law as part of the regular observance of the sabbath/jubilee cycle.

reassure Israel that allowing the land to lie fallow will not mean starvation. In fact, quite the contrary will happen, for God will bless their obedience with abundance (26:4-5,10). The warnings which follow (26:14-20) say that disobedience will bring hardship to the people. Ironically, the writer notes (26:43-44) that these laws won't be observed until Israel is carried off and the land is left desolate.[1]

This direct connection between the Babylonian captivity and the disobedience of the fallow year legislation is made again in II Chr. 36:21. The exile is explained as a fulfilment of the Word of God "until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths".

Under the leadership of Nehemiah, the resettlement of Jerusalem began. As part of the redevelopment, a new covenant was drawn up (Neh. 10:28-39). Included in that covenant was a commitment to "forego the crops of the seventh year . . . ." (v. 31). There is no additional comment or explanation given, leading Wacholder to believe that the original legislation must have been very well known.[2] Batten challenges the involvement of Nehemiah at this point. He sees this as the work of an ardent layman who was deeply committed to the support of temple worship. This reference to the law is seen as his interpolation into the text.[3]

There are two references which employ terminology very similar to that found in Lev. 25:20-22. While they do not speak directly to the

---

[1] These final verses belong to the time of the exile. Their purpose is to give a reason for the punishment of Israel, and to provide hope for the future. God's everlasting covenant will not be forgotten. Even in judgment there is hope. Ronald Clements, Leviticus, BBC (London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1972), p. 70.

[2] Wacholder, "Calendar", p. 157.

[3] Batten, The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, ICC, (Edinburgh: Clark, 1913), p. 373.

fallow year observance, the similarity leads one to believe that the writer was fully conscious of the fallow year regulations. II Kings 19:29 and Isa. 37:30 each refer to the siege of Jerusalem during the reign of Hezekiah:

> "this year you shall eat what grows of itself,
> and in the second year what springs of the same;
> then in the third year sow, and reap, and plant
> vineyards, and eat their fruit." II Kings. 19:29[1]

The immediate situation is not derived cultically, but refers to military necessity due to the siege upon the city. The conceptual similarity with Lev. 25:21-22 leads us to conclude that the writer drew from the jubilee fallow year in order to explain the hope which Jerusalem had even in this critical period.

2. Debt Release

The release of debts, spelled out rather specifically in Deut. 15:1-2, played an important role on two different occasions during the rebuilding of Jerusalem under Nehemiah.

During the rebuilding of the walls of the city, the returning exiles faced severe economic problems. Their children were being given as pledges in order to get food (a practice which bordered upon slavery); their fields and vineyards were heavily mortgaged (leaving them no resources with which to redeem their own children); and they were burdened with exorbitant taxes to the king (Neh. 5:1-13).[2]

There is no basis for interpreting this event as a literal

---

[1] Isa. 37:30 is virtually identical in wording. The only change is the omission of "you shall" in the first phrase.

[2] Some writers feel this belongs to a later period than the actual building of the wall, because work on the wall was done much too quickly to have led to such severe problems. Batten, Ezra and Nehemiah, ICC, p. 238; also E.W. Hamrick, Ezra-Nehemiah, BBC (London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1972), p. 480.

jubilee redemption. It is significant, however, that Nehemiah decided to use the jubilee principles of debt release ("return to them . . . their fields, their vineyards, their olive orchards, and their houses . . ." v. 11) and the remission of interest ("let us leave off this interest . . . and the hundredth of money, grain, wine and oil which you have been exacting of them" vv. 10-11) as the method for solving the crisis. The people responded immediately. The land was restored and specific action was taken regarding the debts; thus funds were released for the redemption of the children and the purchase of badly needed food. There is no mention of the release of slaves because technically slavery was not being practiced. Also, when the land, houses and money were restored, the practice of "quasi-slavery" ceased.[1]

Neh. 10:31 has already been noted with reference to the fallow year. The new covenant also made specific mention of the "exaction of every debt" (cf. Deut. 15:2).

Two other aspects of debt release involve the proper use of the pledge which was given as surety for the loan (see Ex. 22:26), and the charging of interest (Lev. 25:36-37 and Ex. 22:25). The various references to these two particular concerns have only incidental connection with the jubilee debt release and do not in themselves show jubilee observance.[2]

---

[1] North, Sociology, p. 38.

[2] Restrictions on the use of the pledge are given in Deut. 23:20; 24:6, 10-13,17; Job 22:6; 24:3,9; Prov. 20:16; 27:13; Ezek. 18:7-8, 12-13, 16-17; 33:15. The Ezekiel 18 text uses this aspect of the jubilee laws to describe personal responsibility before God. Righteousness is described in ethical terms. Wevers, Ezekiel, NCB (London: Nelson, 1969), p. 141-142 suggests that this is part of a standard code of laws which tests the righteousness of those coming for worship. The text also condemns the charging of interest. Ezek. 22:12 echoes this condemnation. Esther 2:18 mentions a remission of taxes as part of Esther's coronation. Ginzberg, Legends of the Jews IV, (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1936), p. 406 draws a direct connection between Esther and the jubilee.

3. Slave Release

The only instance of direct slave release of a broad general nature is recorded in Jer. 34:8-22.[1] King Zedekiah had made a proclamation of liberty (dᵉrōr) freeing all the Hebrew slaves. The reason for this action is not clear. Some see it purely as a magnanimous act by Zedekiah with no reference to the year of jubilee.[2] Others stress the military significance of the act.[3] Still others see economic and religious motivation.[4]

Soon after being released, the slaves were taken back in direct defiance of the original covenant which stated that they would not be enslaved again. The reaction of Jeremiah was vehement. In his strong condemnation of the owners, he made explicit reference to the original jubilee legislation:

> "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: I made a covenant with your fathers when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, saying, 'At the end of six years each

---

[1] Attention has already been given to Neh. 5. Since that was not a clear case of slavery, it is not included here.

[2] F. Nötscher, Jeremias, (Bonn: Hanstein, 1934), p. 252. W. Rudolph, Jeremias, (Tübingen: Mohr, 1947), p. 189.

[3] This provided a way to replenish the army which was defending the city. When Babylon withdrew (to fight off a threatened invasion from Egypt) and victory seemed certain, the edict was repealed. M. David, "The Manumission of Slaves Under Zedekiah", Oudtestamentische Studiën, Deel V, (1948), pp. 63-64. N.P. Lemche, p. 53; Nicholson, Jeremiah 26-52, CBC, (Cambridge: University Press, 1975), p. 96. Weber, "Wirtschaftsethik" says that this was a typical practice of Israel in time of war, where slave release was a primary way of providing military recruits, p. 78.

[4] By freeing the slaves, the owners would no longer have to feed them, and Zedekiah hoped that his action would win favour with God. James Green, Jeremiah, BBC, (London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1972), p. 160. He also gives strong emphasis to the religious motive. The people needed God to deliver them, so they "got busy complying with his covenantal commands". When God did deliver them (via the Egyptian threat upon Babylon), they reversed their decision, taking the slaves back into their former condition once again.

> of you must set free the fellow Hebrew who has
> been sold to you and has served you six years;
> you must set him free from your service." (vv. 13-14a).

Jeremiah then used their disobedience as the basis for God's wrath upon them.[1]

A combination of military and religious motives provides the best explanation for this event. Zedekiah needed soldiers, and he also hoped that God would be pleased with the release of the slaves. Thus the two goals fitted nicely together. But once they had been delivered from the Babylonian siege, the owners cancelled the manumission edict, causing Jeremiah to declare God's wrath upon them.

It cannot be proven that this was a jubilee year.[2] The important point for our study is that in this time of crisis the king applied the jubilee laws (if only temporarily). It is also important to note that when Jerusalem did fall, Jeremiah pointed to this action of jubilee disobedience as being the reason (34:14-22; 35:17).

The theme of freeing prisoners appears several times in the Psalms. The references demonstrate the beginning of a shift in jubilean emphasis. Ps. 102:19-20; 103:6; and 146:7-8 each posit God as the one who will perform the jubilee action:

> "from heaven the Lord looked down at the earth,
> to hear the groans of the prisoners,
> to set free those who were doomed to die;" (102:19-20).

---

[1] North explains that the slaves had no basis of self-support, so they went back to the owners pleading for help. Help was offered, but only on the former terms of slavery, Sociology, p. 37. But this explanation is improbable. It twists the text which says that the owners "brought them back into subjection", and it does not explain Jeremiah's anger, which would hardly be justified if the initiative had been taken by the slaves.

[2] A. Strobel, "Ursprunge und Geschichte des Frühchristlichen Osterkalendars", TU 121 (1977), pp. 93-95 uses this date as the end of the first seven year cycle in the jubilee cycle. From this he calculates that AD 27/28 was a jubilee year. But we do not agree that this is a firm jubilee date. Thus it is highly questionable as a base for establishing the jubilee cycle.

"The Lord works vindication and justice for
all who are oppressed." (103:6)

"who executes justice for the oppressed;
who gives food to the hungry.
The Lord sets the prisoners free;
the Lord opens the eyes of the blind.
The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;
. . . he upholds the widow and the fatherless;"
(146:7,8,9b).

Gradually, jubilee was shifting from Jewish action in obedience to God, to become God's action upon his people.[1]

Slave release is also included in some rather clear jubilean texts in the prophet Isaiah. These texts[2] will be discussed later under the prophetic use of the jubilee themes.

4. Land Restitution

The jubilee laws decreed that all land should be restored to the original owners as part of the jubilee celebration. The original ownership of the land was determined by lot.[3] This land allotment was critical, for it determined the family inheritance. The protection of this family inheritance was of central importance, for the future economic security of the family was directly involved with the inheritance. Even after the jubilee had been long neglected, the concept of the family inheritance lived on.

Thus we have decided to include in this section references to the inheritance, since it clearly had original jubilean significance. The

---

[1] Ps. 102:13 asks for assurance that God will act again as He did in Israel's past.

[2] Isa. 42:6-7; 49:8-13; 58:5-9; 61:1-3; 63:4-6.

[3] Num. 26:53; 33:53; 34:14; Josh. 14:2. The details of the procedure used are given in Num. 26, 33, 34, and Josh. 13-21.

continuation of the inheritance concern, even when the jubilee was not observed, indicates at least intellectual awareness of the jubilee principles. The inheritance would have had no continuing importance were it not for the background principle of jubilee land restoration.[1]

Our discussion of land restitution will be in three divisions: a) actual situations involving observance or direct influence of jubilee laws; b) legal discussion of the jubilee laws; c) particular Levite regulations.

a) Actual situations

Problems developed even before the original land allotment had been carried out. Zelophehad was of the tribe of Manasseh. He had five daughters and no sons. The daughters challenged the ruling that only sons could receive an inheritance (Num. 27:1-11). Their case was heard and a detailed delineation of inheritance procedures was issued which granted them an inheritance. When the actual allotments were being made, the daughters of Zelophehad came before Joshua and Eleazar to claim their inheritance.

The significance of this section for the jubilee is made clear in the next situation involving Zelophehad's daughters. The brothers of Zelophehad are concerned about what will happen to the inheritance if the daughters should marry outside the tribe (Num. 36). Their inheritance would be lost to the tribe for there would be no one left in the family of Zelophehad to claim it. The result is that certain restrictions were laid down regarding marriage in these special cases, so that the land stayed in the tribe.

---

[1] That the inheritance was understood as God-given is seen by the frequent use of the phrase "the land which the Lord your God gives you for an inheritance". Deut. 4:21; 12:4; 15:4; 19:3,10; 20:16; 21:23; 24:4; 25:19; 26:1; II Chr. 6:27; Ps. 78:58; 105:11; 135:12; 136:21.

The inheritance of the daughters of Zelophehad creates its own set of problems. Ginzberg says that the text is corrupt. He sees no reason to introduce the jubilee theme, because it simply does not apply. The emphasis (he says) is upon tribal land control.[1] Snaith suggests that the story is inserted to explain why the tribe of Manasseh held land West of the Jordan. The story indicates that the land was given to families and not to individuals. The final amendment to the story (in Num. 36) was made to secure allegiance to the law which kept land within the tribe.[2] For our purposes, the story shows the seriousness with which the jubilee regulations were regarded when they were first given.

This serious attitude toward the jubilee inheritance remained with Israel. It is seen in the marriage obligations given in Deut. 25:5-6. The family inheritance is protected by having the widow marry the brother of her dead husband. The brother did not establish a family for himself by this union, for the first son legally succeeded to both name and estate of the deceased brother.[3]

The same concern for family control of the inheritance is the basis for the story of Ruth and Boaz (Ruth 3-4). Boaz was approached by Ruth about kinsman redemption responsibilities (see Lev. 25:25). Boaz was

---

[1] Ginzberg, "Studies", p. 372. But Ginzberg is not correct in his quick dismissal of the jubilee reference. The inter-tribal marriage of an heiress who had land rights had direct jubilee significance, because the land would be lost to the tribe. North, Sociology, p. 35 emphasizes the tribal land control issue. Lemche, p. 55 agrees that the text is difficult, explaining it as a secondary insertion without saying why.

[2] Snaith, "The Daughters of Zelophehad", VT 16 (1966), p. 126-127. Snaith, Leviticus and Numbers, NCB. (Edinburgh: Nelson, 1967), p. 310. He notes the problem of having each daughter receive a full two-portion inheritance. The eldest normally received it, and not any of the others. Snaith concludes that the story makes very little sense.

[3] Driver, Deuteronomy, p. 281-283; also Watts, Deuteronomy, BBC, (London: Marshall, 1972), p 267. The law had specific limitations, applying only when the brothers lived on the same estate and there was no male child born to the first marriage.

careful to follow the jubilee legislation explicitly, and first offered the land to the nearest kinsman (gō'ēl). But this kinsman refused when marriage to Ruth was included. He knew that the land would never belong to him or to his own descendants, but would instead go to the children of Ruth (the first born son would legally be seen as the son of her first husband).[1] Boaz then marries Ruth. The story shows how the jubilee regulations affected the economy, even though the jubilee cycle was not being observed.

The limitations placed upon royalty are shown in the account of Ahab wanting to gain possession of Naboth's vineyard (I Kings 21). Naboth refused to sell the land, or even to trade it for equally valuable land. This demonstrates the deeply rooted aversion to alienation of inheritance property. It also shows the restrictions which were placed upon royalty, giving them no right to seize private land in defiance of the jubilee regulations.[2]

Adherence to the jubilee laws is seen in a slightly different manner in II Kings 8:1-6. The jubilee connection in this story is seen in several ways. The woman returned to her property after an absence of seven years (this seven year period is emphasized, being mentioned three times, in vv. 1,2,3). She appealed to the king for the return of her

---

[1] The reason the kinsman gave was that his own inheritance would be threatened. How this would be is not clear. Buhl says that the go'el response is a polite way of saying that he does not want to marry Ruth. "Social Institutions of the Israelites", AJTh 1 (1897), p. 736. We prefer the explanation of Gray, who says that legally the inheritance would not have been endangered, but by redeeming (buying) land which would not remain in his family, he would be using his own capital resources which were needed to maintain his own inheritance. Thus his problem was not legal but economic. He saw it as a poor investment when marriage to Ruth was included. Gray, Joshua, Judges, Ruth (London: Nelson, 1967), p. 421; so also Campbell, Ruth, AB (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1957), p. 159.

[2] Ginzberg, "Studies", p. 371.

land. It was restored at no charge, and she was reimbursed for the produce grown in her absence. The redemption procedure has very close similarity with the guidelines for determining redemption value as given in Lev. 25:27. The story demonstrates that the jubilee regulations were being kept alive through their application in specific cases.

One of the most explicit incidents of jubilee redemption is in Jeremiah 32. Jerusalem was facing an extended siege by the Babylonians when Jeremiah was given the right of redemption of a field at Anathoth. Due to the impending war and the location of the property (the enemy would come directly across it), the redemption price was very small.[1] This transaction was used by Jeremiah to demonstrate his hope for the future. He bought the field, taking care to have it properly registered so that in the future when lands would again be bought and sold, it would be known to be his property. Green believes that this shows the depth of jubilee conviction regarding land ownership, even when it involved endangered property.[2] Our point is that the jubilee procedure was sufficiently well known for Jeremiah to use it as a vehicle for his message of hope to the people of Jerusalem.

b) Legal Interpretations

Difficulties in the enforcement of the jubilee laws soon led to the need for legal interpretation of various points. Some of these were the result of actual situations (see the daughters of Zelophehad, above) but other legal interpretations are not so obviously attached to a specific situation. These discussions of the jubilee laws indicate the continuing awareness of their existence.

---

[1] Lemche, p. 55; also Ginzberg, "Studies", p. 375.

[2] Green, Jeremiah, p. 156.

Detailed instructions regarding the dedication of property to the Lord, and the possible recovery of such property are given in Lev. 27: 16-25. Various possibilities are given and explicit instructions are provided. A penalty of 1/5th was imposed when the owner changed his mind and tried to redeem property which had been dedicated to God. The value of the land declined in relation to the approach of the jubilee year (vv. 17-18, see Lev. 25:26-27). Unredeemed land became the property of the priests (v. 21). The problem of dishonesty was also discussed. It was not possible to purchase land, then dedicate it to the Lord in order to keep it from automatically returning to the original owner at the jubilee. Or if a man dedicated a field to God, then quietly sold it to someone else, at the jubilee it became sanctuary property and the man lost all his inheritance rights to the property.[1]

Another type of dishonesty is condemned in Deut. 19:14. The jubilee restoration of land depended upon accurate landmarks. To remove a landmark (or even to move it to a different location) was indeed a very serious offense since it directly affected all future land transfers.[2]

After the exile, the old tribal boundaries were unrealistic in definition. One of the first concerns of the returning exiles was to establish new land allocation for the temple, for the prince, and for the people. Ezek. 45:1-9 gives the prince a special allocation, equal in size to that of a tribe. This was done to support the full royal household, and to prevent the prince from confiscating the property of the people (v. 9).[3]

---

[1] Clements, Leviticus, p. 72.

[2] Driver, Deuteronomy, p. 234. This is also mentioned in Deut. 27:17; Hos. 5:10; Prov. 22:28; Job 24:2.

[3] Cooke, p. 495 says that this material is not from Ezekiel, but is assembled here with little concern for order. Wevers, p. 323 says it comes from "snippets of varied origins".

c) Levite Considerations

Special consideration was given to the inheritance of the Levites. Originally, they were not granted an inheritance of land.[1] In order that they might have a place to live, each of the tribes was instructed to give to the Levites certain cities in which they could dwell, as well as the surrounding pasturelands (Num. 35:2-8). In addition, other lands which were dedicated to God came under Levite control (Lev. 27:21).[2] This led to a much broader control of land and property than was originally foreseen. The Lev. 25 regulations about property redemption for Levites reflect this later development. They had not received large tracts of land as had the other tribes, but even their small holdings were protected by the jubilee laws.

There are many other Old Testament texts which refer to the inheritance in an indirect way. Thus they have only secondary relationship with the jubilee laws. They do indicate, however, the continuing awareness of the close relationship between God, the people and the land.[3]

---

[1] Num. 18:20,24; 26:62; Dt. 10:9; 14:27,29; Josh. 13:14,33 14:3,4; Num. 35:2,8 also speak to this issue.

[2] This is affirmed in Ezek. 44:28 which deals with temple ordinances and Levite regulations. Their needs are to be met by receiving a share of the offerings. Possession of real and personal property was denied them.

[3] The following references speak of the land being an inheritance. (nāchal - to inherit; yārash - to occupy or to inherit; and chālaq - to make allotment are used in the references listed here.) Verses referring to Israel (the people) as God's inheritance are not included.
Num. 32:18,19; 34:2,15,17,18,29; Deut. 21:16; 29:28; 32:8; Josh. 11:23; 13:6,7,8,15,23,24,28,29,32; 14:1,3,9,13,14; 15:10 16:4,5,8,9; 18:2,4,7,20,28; 19:1,2,8,9,10,16,23,31,39,41,48,49,51; 21:3; 23:4; 24:28,30; Judg. 2:6,9,; 11:2; 18:1; 20:6; 21:17,23,24; I Sam. 26:19; II Sam. 14:16; 20:1,19; I Kgs. 8:36; 12:16; I Chr. 16:18; 28:8; II Chr. 6:29; 10:16; Ezra 9:12; Neh. 11:20; Job 31:2; 42:15; Ps. 28:9 Prov. 13:22; 20:21; Jer. 3:18,19; 16:18; Lam. 5:2; Ezek. 35:15; 47:13,14,22,23; 48:29; Micah 2:2.

E. JUBILEE THEMES IN THE LATTER PROPHETS

In addition to the historical and legal references, jubilee appears frequently as a theme of prophetic concern. A deep concern for justice and holiness runs throughout the prophetic writings with continuing mention of God's concern for the poor. The jubilee legislation speaks clearly to this concern regarding justice and hope for the poor. From the many references on this general theme of the poor, we have included only those which contain a more direct jubilee base.

Jubilee was an attempt to keep the small landowner on his land. But the existence of the jubilee laws did not eliminate injustice. Isa. 5:8 condemns those

> "who join house to house, who add field to field,
> until there is no more room, and you are made
> to dwell alone in the midst of the land."

It implies that injustice can be present even when a fair price is paid for the land, and the property is sold legally, without the pressure of heavy debts. Justice demanded that the land remain more or less inalienably distributed among many people. When it became concentrated in the hands of the few (even when that concentration was done legally) monopolistic oppression followed. Even within the jubilee cycle, some landowners accumulated inordinate amounts of property, causing the poor to suffer unjustly.[1] This accumulation of property contributed to the neglect of the jubilee laws. The wealthy landowners would have been the very persons who would have fought against the jubilee principles. The text emphasizes the dangers involved in the alienation of land from its owner, something which the jubilee laws specifically prevented.

---

[1] Eerdmans, p. 127; so also North, Sociology, p. 39.

In Isaiah, the jubilee laws begin to show a significant adjustment in emphasis. The trend does not begin here, for it started long before the time of Isaiah, but it surfaces here in a distinct manner.

When the exiles dreamed of returning to Palestine, their dreams envisioned a society which included the concepts of jubilee. Isa. 29:18-20 describes a reversal of conditions where the poor will be exalted and the arrogant put to rout:

> "In that day the deaf shall hear the words of a book,
> and out of their gloom and darkness the eyes of the
> blind shall see.
> The meek shall obtain fresh joy in the Lord,
> and the poor among men shall exult in the Holy
> One of Israel.
> For the ruthless shall come to naught
> and the scoffer cease,
> and all who watch to do evil shall be cut off, ; . ."

Thus even the national order will participate in this restoration.[1] The shape of the world will be transformed and God will create a community for himself from among the poor and the needy. The new salvation is described as involving a radical transformation of nature and of human relationships. The emphasis upon the re-establishment of the poor, and the elimination of injustice have obvious overtones of the jubilee principles.[2]

The same joyful theme of restoration is found in Isa. 35:5-10:

> "Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened,
> and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

---

[1] Herbert, Isaiah 1-39, CBC (Cambridge, University Press, 1973), p. 171. The metaphor actually begins in v. 17 where Lebanon, the symbol of pride because of their majestic oaks will be reduced to grazing land.

[2] Delitzsch, Prophecies of Isaiah II, (Edinburgh: Clark, 1890), p. 23; Kaiser, Isaiah 13-39, (London: SCM, 1974), p. 278-279. He defines the blind and deaf as being the Jewish cultic community which honors God but rejects the eschatological teaching of the prophets. Delitzsch says that the nation is blind and deaf, so that when this event occurs, the nation will have their eyes and ears opened.

"then shall the lame man leap like a hart,
and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy.
. . . the ransomed of the Lord shall return
and come to Zion with singing." (vv. 5,6,10a).

Once again the new society has jubilee orientation, and here, even the land will have new life.[1] Torrey sees v. 5 as being an exact counterpart of Isa. 42:7; 49:9 and 61:1-2 (each of which will be noted later for their jubilee content). He notes, however, that the prophet sees the blessings which are promised as being primarily spiritual in nature, and that the line drawn here is not between Jew and Gentile, but between the foes of Yahweh and his friends, between the wicked and the righteous. He says that v. 6 has direct connections with the healing references found in Lk 7:22, and that they should be seen as literal healings which will occur in the messianic age.[2] Kaiser stays with a more immediate application, saying that v. 5 refers to prisoners who are set free from their dark prisons, so that their eyes are open to see the light once again.[3]

In Isa. 42 we see the gradual shift in emphasis which was being given to the jubilee. The chapter begins with a declaration regarding the servant of the Lord which emphasizes his role in bringing justice:

"Behold my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my Spirit upon him,
he will bring forth justice for the nations." (v. 1).

This is followed by a firm statement of the perseverance of the servant in his prescribed task:

---

[1] Herbert, p. 195.

[2] C. Torrey, The Second Isaiah (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1928), pp. 294-295. Jesus followed this same approach in Lk 4 where he did not accept the straight Jew-Gentile division.

[3] Kaiser, p. 364.

"... he will faithfully bring forth justice.
He will not fail or be discouraged till he has
established justice on the earth; ..." (vv. 3c-4a).

Then after a verse which declares the majesty and power of God, the nature of the justice to be delivered is described in jubilee terms:

"I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness,
I have taken you by the hand and kept you;
I have given you as a covenant to the people,
a light to the nations,
to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
from the prison those who sit in darkness." (vv. 6-7).

The basic concept of Israel's responsibility in performing the jubilee activity is retained, but it is preceded and followed by strong statements about the activity of God in bringing justice to the earth, particularly vv. 14-17 where the phrase "I will ..." (referring to God) occurs 9 times. There are also other specific references to jubilee orientated persons: the blind (v. 16); the deaf (v. 18); those hidden in prison (v. 22).

Here in Isa. 42 the activity of God in performing the jubilee overlaps with the responsibility of Israel for jubilee, demonstrating the gradual shift in emphasis which was taking place. Jubilee was slowly moving away from the activity of Israel among themselves, towards becoming the future deliverance by God.[1]

This God orientated jubilee concept appears again in Isa. 49:8-13.

"In a time of favour I have answered you,
in a day of salvation I have helped you;
I have kept you and given you as a covenant
to the people,

---

[1] James Smart, History and Theology in 2nd Isaiah, (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965), p. 87. He sees this distinctly Messianic content and makes the jubilee connection, but he spiritualizes the text, saying that the blind and the prisoners are Gentiles who represent the lost condition of people without God. This "God is the agent" emphasis is even more directly seen in Ps. 102:19-20; 103:6; and 146:7-8. (see above pp. 60-61).

to establish the land,
to apportion the desolate heritages;
saying to the prisoners, "Come forth",
and to those who are in darkness, "Appear". (vv. 8-9).

Although the basic reference is to the original occupation of the land, the emphasis is upon God as the agent. The reference to God's past activity is intended to strengthen their hope for the future. The phrases "to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages; saying to the prisoners, come forth" all have jubilee signficance.[1]

After the restoration of the temple, fast days lost much of their meaning. People began to ask whether or not they should continue to fast. Isa. 58:5-9 redefines fasting from action towards God (through punishment of the self) to action towards your fellow human beings:

"Will you call this a fast,
and a day acceptable to the Lord?
Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of wickedness,
to undo the thongs of the yoke
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;" (vv. 5c-7a).

What God had promised to Israel, and what she had experienced, resulted in a new value being attached to freedom. Isaiah said that helping another person recover his/her freedom is more pleasing to God than pious punishment of the flesh.[2] Action which is acceptable to God is described in jubilee terms of "loosing bonds, freeing the oppressed, and breaking yokes". Isaiah then used these concepts to call people back to the basic justice and mercy which is at the heart of worship of God.[3]

---

[1] C. Westermann, Isaiah 40 - 66, (London: SCM, 1969), pp. 214-215.

[2] Westermann, pp. 336-337.

[3] Smart, p. 250.

Isa. 61:1-2 takes these same jubilee themes and uses them to describe the dawn of the age of salvation which was to involve a great transformation in the lives of those people who were suffering.

> "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
> because the Lord has anointed me to bring good
> tidings to the afflicted;
> he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
> to proclaim liberty to the captives,
> and the opening of the prison to those
> who are bound;
> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour,
> and the day of vengeance of our God;
> to comfort all who mourn;" (vv. 1-2)

There is considerable disagreement on the original formation and meaning of these two verses. There are three basic approaches to the text: It is seen as an ebed-Yahweh poem;[1] or as an early poetic midrash on the ebed theme, heavily influenced by the ebed poems;[2] or it is seen as the call of the prophet himself, who in this case is understood as Third Isaiah.[3]

There is a problem in determining the identity of the speaker as well. Is it the prophet, or the servant of Yahweh? Morgenstern separates v. 1 from the remainder of the chapter, noting a change in the person of the speaker. He believes that in v. 1 the speaker is the servant of Yahweh and so he refers to Yahweh in the third person, but that in vv. 2-9 this changes and Yahweh himself is the speaker. He also believes that the addition of v. 1 to this chapter was influenced by the presence of liqro in both vv. 1 and 2. He then goes on to point out that the prophetic

---

[1] W.W. Cannon, "Isaiah 61:1-3, an ebed-Yahweh poem", ZAW 60, (1929), pp. 284-288. Koch, "Der Gottesgeist und der Messias", Biblica 27, (1946), pp. 396-401. O. Procksch, Theologie des Alten Testaments, (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1950), p. 290.

[2] W. Zimmerli, Archäologie und Altes Testaments, (Tübingen: Mohr, 1970), pp. 321-322.

[3] Westermann, p. 366. K. Elliger, "Der Prophet-tritojesaja", ZAW 49 (1931), pp. 112-141.

message of v. 1 was primarily directed to Israel, proclaiming their salvation. This, he claims, is fully out of keeping with the announcement of vengeance found in v. 2, thus they did not originally belong together.[1]

Sanders says that an Isaianic disciple was engaging in a very early midrashic reflection based on the Deutero-Isaiah tradition, and that these verses have their roots in what was the essence of an exilic sermon based on Lev. 25:10.[2]

Westermann sees significance in the juxtaposition of "day" and "year" in v. 2 (day of vengeance — year of favour). This indicates a shift from a particular event in a given year to an experience which became an era.[3] Fischer makes the jubilee reference still more vivid by saying that these are not true prisoners in the usual sense of the word (due to criminal activity), but refers to people who are shackled by economic and social conditions from which there was no escape.[4]

The messiah was expected to take direct, forceful action to correct these injustices, and to free Israel from her oppressors. The treatment of this text shows that a shift in emphasis is becoming increasingly pronounced in Jewish theology. The task of bringing freedom is now firmly established as the activity of God. Jubilee was no longer their own responsibility, for they did not see themselves as oppressors of anyone,

---

[1] Morgenstern, "Isaiah 61", HUCA 40 (1969), pp. 109-110. The debate over the person of the speaker is given thorough discussion by Skinner, Isaiah XL-LXVI, CBSC, (Cambridge: University Press, 1929), pp. 204-205.

[2] J. Sanders, "From Isaiah 61 to Luke 4" in Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-Roman Cults, Pt. I, New Testament, (Leiden: Brill, 1975), p. 83. He also believes that the later LXX translator fully understood this and chose his words accordingly.

[3] Westermann, p. 366.

[4] F. Fischer, Das Buch Isaias, 2 Teil, (Bonn: Hanstein, 1939), p. 179. Specific words in the text will be treated as part of the Luke 4 quotation.

thus they had no role to play in correcting any wrongs. They (Israel) were the afflicted, the brokenhearted, the captives who would hear the good tidings from God's servant, and to whom liberty would be proclaimed. The text is still seen as describing literal activity, but Israel has moved from doing to receiving, and the time for this activity has been moved from the present to the future.[1]

Isa. 63:4-6 links Israel's disobedience of the jubilee laws with her destruction:

> "For the day of vengeance was in my heart,
> and my year of redemption has come.
> I looked, but there was no one to help;
> I was appalled, but there was no one to uphold;
> so my own arm brought me victory,
> and my wrath upheld me." (vv. 4-5).

The year of redemption (jubilee — ge'ullah) had come, but no one was prepared to obey it, so God's punishment had come upon them.

Although Isaiah contains the most frequent references to jubilee concepts, other prophets were also concerned about it. Ezek. 7:12-13 speaks of the seller "not returning to what he has sold". There is disagreement whether this is a simple reference to the fall of Jerusalem and the total collapse of the economic life of the nation, or whether it has a more veiled meaning of jubilee. Cooke says that since the time of Jerome, this has been understood as referring to the jubilee. Due to the breakup of the nation, there would be no chance for people to return to their ancestral property.[2] Bunn sees it simply as a local catastrophe, referring only to the tragic events of the period.[3]

---

[1] Because of the importance of this text in our study, its use in Rabbinic material and in the Dead Sea Scrolls will be noted.

[2] Cooke, Ezekiel, ICC, (Edinburgh: Clark, 1936), p. 80. But he adds that this reference does not prove that the jubilee was being observed.

[3] John Bunn, Ezekiel, BBC (London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1972), p. 252.

The reference to a coming day which lessens the desirability of acquiring land, and at the same time makes the loss of one's own land a matter of relative indifference, has strong jubilee overtones. While the next verses bring us face to face with the immediate historical situation, we find the use of the jubilee terminology to be significant. The coming tragedy will so completely devastate the economy that all property titles will be obliterated and there will be no way to reclaim the family inheritance properties.[1]

This same concept appears in Ezek. 11:15-21. Those who had controlled the land have been carried off into captivity. Only the poor are left behind, and the land is left to them. Thus the poor (who had lost their land to the rich) have the land restored to them simply because the rich have been carried off into captivity. Ezekiel adds a note of hope to all this, saying that God will continue to be with the exiles, and that they will return; but that when they do, they will have a new heart and a new spirit (v. 19).[2]

The book of Daniel does not mention "jubilee" by name, but the jubilee cycle is seen by Owens and also by Wacholder to be the foundation for the calculations found in Dan. 9:24-27. This bears close resemblance to Lev. 25:8, indicating that Daniel's interpretation of the seventy years is based on the sabbath year cycle.[3]

---

[1] A.B. Davidson, Ezekiel, CBSC, (Cambridge: University Press, 1900), p. 48 follows this approach, but adds that the prophet is referring specifically to those people who made forced sales before being carried off into captivity by Jehoiachin, and who would want to come back to exercise the jubilee principle of redeeming what had once been theirs.

[2] Wevers, p. 96.

[3] Owens, Daniel, BBC, (London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1972), p. 439; Wacholder, "Chronomessianism", p. 210.

F. CONCLUSIONS

Our study of the Old Testament found no evidence indicating that the jubilee was ever observed on any standard cyclical basis. But that does not mean that the concepts of jubilee were unknown to the Jewish people, or that the various aspects of the jubilee legislation played no part in the socio-economic life of the people. We have shown that elements of the jubilee laws were used on occasion as the basis for direct radical action in certain critical times (Num. 36; Jer. 34; Ezek. 45). We have also shown that the prophets (primarily Isaiah) used elements of the jubilee theme as a vehicle calling for obedience and offering a corresponding hope for the future. We found sufficient incidental references to jubilee concepts to show that they played an important background role in Israel's political and economic life.

We have also shown the transformation of jubilee from a principle to be followed by the people as they settled on the land, to a futuristic hope dependent upon the activity of God. This transformation is important, for we will see that it contributed to the hostility which Jesus faced in Nazareth as he made his jubilee proclamation.

We conclude therefore, that although the jubilee was not observed in its regular cycle, and although the theological content of jubilee had been substantially altered, the jubilee concepts were well known by the first century Jewish people and held a prominent place in their theology of God's relationship to them in the future.

CHAPTER II

THE JUBILEE IN INTERTESTAMENTAL AND RELATED JEWISH LITERATURE

Included in this section are the Apocrypha, the Pseudepigrapha, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Mishnah, and the writings of Philo and Josephus. These materials span a wide range of years, with the Mishnah particularly being late and technically not Intertestamental material. We include it here because it serves as a compilation of the Oral Tradition which was current (or at least developing) throughout this period. It is a record of Jewish thought at the conclusion of this very critical period.

Together, these materials provide an insight into the development of Jewish religious thought and practice for the period running approximately two hundred years either side of the time of Jesus.

A. THE APOCRYPHA AND PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

The jubilee with its related themes receives a different treatment in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha from that which they received in the Old Testament. There are few explicit references that can be associated directly with the Old Testament laws. The references which do exist (with the exception of several fallow year references) are not precise, for they tend towards spiritualization of the inheritance, and do not describe the jubilee as a socio-economic pattern for life.

The Book of Jubilees demonstrates this change. The purpose of the

Book of Jubilees was to project the publication of the Mosaic law back to the creation, and to show that it was scrupulously obeyed in every detail by the pre-Mosaic patriarchs.[1] North explains that since the book was written to show detailed obedience of the Mosaic law, and since the jubilee was used as an explicit measure of time, the writer appeared to be saying that the jubilee was observed, with the proof being that time was measured by the jubilee cycle. But the social reforms of the jubilee legislation were only a memory of past greatness. There was little attempt to apply them to the present situation.[2]

1. The Jubilee

The jubilee is mentioned twice in the Testament of Levi (17:2,3), in each case as a time reference similar in style to that of the Book of Jubilees.[3] Within the Book of Jubilees itself, there is continual reference to jubilee as a device for reckoning time. Only in Jubilees 50:1-5 is there any mention of the Levitical jubilee laws. The jubilee year is directly related to the Sabbath year cycle of seven years, thus giving a forty-nine year jubilee cycle.

II Baruch 70:3-4 uses very vague jubilee-sounding terminology to describe the terrible events which will happen at the end of time. There will be a reversal of roles where the poor will have abundance and those of low degree will be exalted.

---

[1] R.H. Charles, The Book of Jubilees, Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, (Cambridge: University Press, 1902), p. xiii.

[2] North, Sociology, p. 73

[3] All references to the Apocrypha are from the RSV. References to the Pseudepigrapha are from R.H. Charles, Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976-77 reprint of 1913 edition). For our purposes we are following the dating provided by Charles for both the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. The writings are cited in chronological order by centuries within each jubilee sub-theme.

2. Debt Release

Sirach contains a series of references which express concern for the poor in terminology similar to that of the jubilee. Proper behaviour towards the poor and oppressed is discussed in Sirach 4:1-10:

> ". . . deprive not the poor of his living . . . .
> Do not grieve the one who is hungry, nor anger a man in want.
> . . . nor delay your gift to a beggar
> . . . nor turn your face away from the poor.
> Incline your ear to the poor, and answer him peaceably and gently.
> Deliver him who is wronged from the hand of the wrongdoer." (Sirach 4:1a,2,3b,8-9a).

In a discussion of lending and borrowing, Sirach 29:1-10 contains this admonition:

> "He that shows mercy will lend to his neighbour,
> and he that strengthens him with his hand keeps the commandments.
> Lend to your neighbour in the time of his need."[1] (Sirach 29:1-2a).

The jubilee association is made in v. 4: "many persons regard a loan as a windfall and cause trouble for those who help them", and again in v. 7: "therefore, many have refused to lend; they have been afraid of being defrauded needlessly." People had borrowed money, but did not pay it back either because of dishonesty, or because of planning on having the debt erased by the coming of the Sabbath year. It was precisely this problem which led Rabbi Hillel to institute the prozbul (see p. 87).

Two experiences of royal tribute release are recorded in I Maccabees. Demetrius, making a bid for Jewish loyalty in his struggle against Alexander, promised to release the Jews from "the payment of tribute

---

[1] Compare this with Deut. 17:7-8, "you shall not . . . shut your hand against your brother, but you shall open your hand to him, and lend him sufficient for his need."

and salt tax and crown levies" (I Macc. 10:29).[1] He connects this with the Jewish cultic observances by designating Sabbaths, New Moons, appointed days, etc. to be

> "days of immunity and release for all the Jews . . . , no man shall have any authority to exact anything from any of them" (I Macc. 10:34-35).

Later, Antiochus VII asked for Jewish support, using the same method. I Macc. 15:5-8 tells of the terms which he offered:

> "I confirm to you all the tax remissions that the kings before me have granted you, and release from all other payments from which they have released you. . . . every debt you owe . . . shall be cancelled for you from henceforth and for all time."

IV Macc. 2:8 describes what happens to a person who orders his life according to the law. The terminology is strikingly jubilean in concept:

> "he . . . lends money to the needy without interest, and at the seventh year period cancels the debt."

But this reference is describing an ideal situation, and it does not assume that such behaviour was widely accepted among the people. It was thought that doing these things placed one in a special category of piety.

3. Release of Slaves

The letter to Aristeas 12-28 reports action taken by Ptolemy Philadelphus freeing those slaves who had been taken to Egypt by Ptolemy's father. Aristeas urged the king to set an example of magnanimity for all mankind by releasing these slaves. The king then purchased the freedom of all the slaves and their children, commanding that they be set free at once.

---

[1] Demetrius also promised "to set free without payment" every captive taken from the land of Judah.

While this action is clearly not a jubilee slave release, Aristeas used terminology similar to that of the jubilee slave release in his prayer to God "that all the captives might be set at liberty" (Aristeas 17, cf. Lev. 25:10), and in his concern that the children should be released with their parents (Aristeas 27, cf. Lev. 25:41 and 54).

I Macc. 9:70-72 tells of Jonathan's efforts to negotiate a peace treaty with Bacchides, the terms of which included "release of the captives" (v. 70). Bacchides agreed and restored those captives who had been taken out of the land of Judah.

II Macc. 1:27 records part of a prayer by Jonathan in which he said:

> "Gather together our scattered people, set free those who are slaves among the Gentiles, look upon those who are rejected and despised, and let the Gentiles know that thou art our God."

We note especially the clear shift in emphasis found here. Jubilee had stated that the people should free the slaves which they themselves held. Now Jonathan is praying that God will free those held in slavery. The reason God should do this is so that the heathen will know "that thou art our God". This same concern about the awareness of God as a foundation for obedience runs throughout the jubilee laws ("I am the Lord your God", Lev. 25:17,38,55).

II Macc. 8:14-16 presents the slave issue in a different perspective. Nicanor had pledged to sell Jewish slaves to Rome. When he began his attack (in order to capture the promised slaves) Judas Maccabeas called on the Jews to defend themselves

> "if not for their own sakes,
> at least for the sake of the covenants
> made with their fathers . . . ." (v. 15).

One of those covenants made with the fathers would be the jubilee, which stated that Jews are not to serve as slaves (Lev. 25:39, 42).

4. The Fallow Year

The explanation for the captivity in Babylon given in II Chr. 36:21 is picked up in several of these writings. I Esdras 1:58 is a direct quote of II Chr. 36:21:

> "Until the land has enjoyed its sabbaths,
> it shall keep sabbath all the time of its
> desolation until the completion of seventy years."

The same theme is seen in Sibylline Oracles III, lines 280-281:

> "Therefore for seven decades of time thy
> fruitful land shall all be empty of thee
> and (so shall) thy wondrous shrine."[1]

The Book of Jubilees has one reference to the fallow year in 7:36-38, but it is incomplete, with a major gap precisely at that point where the seventh year would most obviously have been mentioned. The text discusses proper use of food during the third and fourth years, then goes on to the fifth year. But it is here that the gap occurs, with the text beginning again in a discussion which obviously focuses on the activities of the seventh year:

> "And in the fifth year . . . . . make
> ye the release so that ye release it in
> righteousness and uprightness, and ye shall
> be righteous and all that you plant shall prosper."

This concept bears strong similarity to Lev. 25:21, with its concern for a proper spirit in obedience and for assurance of sufficient food during the fallow year.

I Macc. 6:49 and 53 give the most precise mention of the fallow year in these texts. Judas is forced to make peace with Antiochus at Bethsura. The reason give in v. 49 is:

> "because they had no provisions there to withstand a
> siege, since it was a sabbatical year for the land."

---

[1] Ep. of Jeremy 3 refers vaguely to a similar period "a long season even for seven generations".

This is repeated again in v. 53:

> "But they had no food in storage, because it
> was the seventh year; those who had found
> safety in Judea from the Gentiles had
> consumed the last of the stores."

5. Land Restitution

The importance of the land as the inheritance given by God continues to be a major emphasis in Intertestamental literature, while reference to any literal concept of restoring the land to the original owners on a regular jubilee cycle is totally lost by this time.

Sirach 5:8 speaks of not trusting in unrighteous gains "For they shall profit (thee) nothing in the day of wrath." Coming at the end of a section on the evils of tempting God, the first application of this "day of wrath" is to a future judgment, but the jubilee theme of restoration is present as well. There will be a day when things will be put right, and ill-gotten wealth will have no value.

Sirach 22:23 has the spirit of jubilee as it sees poverty and affliction as being only temporary, a state which will be corrected by coming prosperity:

> "Gain the trust of your neighbour in his poverty,
> that you may rejoice with him in his prosperity;
> stand by him in time of affliction,
> that you may share with him in his inheritance."

Sirach 45:25 speaks to the issue of the rights of royal inheritance:

> "The heritage of the king is from son to son only;[1]
> so the heritage of Aaron is for his descendants."

---

[1] See Ezek. 45:7-8. Charles, Apocrypha, p. 489 says that this is a corrupt text, that it should read "the inheritance of a man passes to his son alone". His point is not convincing, for there are many exceptions to the "son alone" premise. It is more probable that the limitation is intended to keep the king from disposing of royal property, for if that should happen, it could lead to the return of land seizure by later kings in order to finance the monarchy.

The Testament of Zebulon 9:8 contains a striking parallel to Lev. 25:10. Zebulon gives this a distinctly futuristic interpretation and applies the jubilee theme to the Messianic age as he says:

> "and after these things shall there arise unto you
> the Lord himself,
> the light of righteousness,
> and ye shall return unto your land."

This accurately summarizes the general attitude found in the Intertestamental literature. The jubilee was combined with the Messianic age, an understanding which was prominent in Judaism during the time of Jesus.

A related shift in emphasis can be seen in the Fragments of a Zadokite Work which twice mentions moving the landmark (1:11 and 8:1). In each case the situation is spiritualized so that the problem of moving the landmark (see Deut. 19:14) becomes a reference to a man (1:11) or to an unnamed "they" (8:1) who removed the spiritual landmark set by the forefathers and then led Israel astray. The concept of jubilee in this way was moved from literal obedience to spiritual symbolism.

Scattered throughout the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha are passing references to the inheritance and related aspects of it.[1] From these references one concludes that the language of inheritance and restitution was still there, but the deeper literal meaning of the language was gone and that the words were understood in a symbolic sense. Jubilee as a socio-economic practice for the nation had been lost. It had become nothing more than a symbol for their hope in the future.

---

[1] I Esdras 5:8, 8:3; Sirach 9:6,22:23, 24:7,8,11, 42:3, 44:11, 45:25, 46:1,8,9; Testament of Issachar 5:7; Testament of Dan 7:3; I Macc 3:36,57, 15:33,34; Book of the Secrets of Enoch 10:5,6; Psalms of Solomon 9:1,2; Assumption of Moses 2:1.

B. THE MISHNAH

1. The Jubilee

The jubilee is mentioned twenty-five times by name in the Mishnah, with a major discussion found in Arakhin 7 - 9.[1] Arakhin is the legal discussion of valuations, the sum to be paid for the release of persons who have dedicated themselves or some of their property to the service of the Sanctuary. Arak. 7 - 8 covers various possibilities in the redemption of a field which had been dedicated (see Lev. 25:16-25), while Arak. 9 deals primarily with redemption of houses within a walled city (see Lev. 25:29-34).

Other explicit references to jubilee are found in Rosh ha-Shanah 1:1 which gives the 1st Tishri as the New Year day for the reckoning of the jubilee years:

> "There are four 'New Year' days: . . . on the 1st of Tishri is the New Year for the reckoning of the years for the Years of Release and Jubilee years, . . ."

and Rosh ha-Shanah 3:5 which gives the regulations regarding the proper horn to be used for announcing the year:

> "The Year of Jubilee is like to the New Year in the blowing of the shofar and in the Benedictions. R. Judah says: At the New Year they use rams' horns and at the Years of Jubilee wild goats' horns."[2]

---

[1] Mishnah references and abbreviations are from H. Danby, The Mishnah (Oxford: Clarendon, 1933). For dating purposes, we are following the rabbinic chronology suggested by Danby, pp. 789-800 and by Schürer, History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (Edinburgh: Clark, 1973), pp. 74-75. Revised English Translation of 1885 edition.

[2] R. Judah (140-165 AD) thus indicates a change from the original connection of the jubilee with the ram's horn.

Kiddushin 1:2 comments on the different ways by which a Hebrew bondman could acquire his freedom:

> "and he acquires his freedom by service lasting six years or by the entering in of the year of Jubilee or by redeeming himself at his outstanding value."

It also notes that a slave who had had his ear pierced (Ex. 21:6, Dt. 15:17):

> "acquires his freedom by the entering in of the year of Jubilee or by the death of his master."

Bekhoroth 8:10 gives details on what did (and what did not) revert to the first owner in the year of jubilee:

> "These do not revert to their first owners in the year of Jubilee: the Firstborn's portion, what a man inherits from his wife, what he inherits that performs levirate marriage, and what is given as a gift."[1]

2. Debt Release

Debt release is discussed in some detail in Shebiith 10 as part of the seventh year laws. Significant in this discussion is the introduction of the prozbul, a procedure for legally collecting debts which normally would have been released in the seventh year. The prozbul was created by Hillel the elder (who lived prior to the time of Jesus) and was the subject of much discussion by later rabbis.[2] Hillel saw that people were very hesitant about making loans as the sabbath/jubilee year approached. In order to keep the economy functioning, he instituted the prozbul. The formula for the prozbul is given in Mishnah Shebiith 10:4

---

[1] R. Eliezer (80-100 AD), R. Johanan b. Baroka (120-140 AD) and R. Meir (140-165 AD) are all cited, indicating continuing interest in the subject.

[2] R. Huspith, R. Eliezer, and R. Judah, each belonging to a different period, all have comments on the discussion of Hillel's prozbul.

> "I affirm to you, such-a-one and such-a-one, the judges in such-a-place, that, touching any debt due to me, I will collect it whensoever I will."

This was then validated by the judges. Any loan secured by a prozbul was not affected by the Šemittāh.

The use of the pledge (which was related to debt release and the exacting of interest--see Ex. 22:25-26) is mentioned six times in addition to the Shebiith discussion.[1]

3. Slave Release

The procedure for release of slaves is discussed in Kiddushin 1:2. There is a reference to the jubilee release, then several additions are made. A bondmaid acquired her freedom "through manifesting the tokens of puberty"[2] and a bondman who had had his ear pierced acquired his freedom in the jubilee year, and also "by the death of his master" (see above, p. 87).

Mo'ed Katan 3:1-2 indicates that during mid-festival days certain persons were permitted to cut their hair and wash their clothes:

> "These alone may cut their hair during mid-festival: he that comes from beyond the sea, or from captivity, or out of prison. . . ." (The same persons are also permitted to wash their clothes.)

General activity was severely restricted during mid-festival days, with permissible activity being spelled out in some detail (M.Kat. 3:2-9). It is unlikely that persons would be released from prison other than for ceremonial release. We see in this reference an adapted reference to

---

[1] Ket. 13:8; B.M. 6:7, 9:13; Shebu. 6:7; Eduy. 8:2; Arak 6:3f

[2] At which time the owner had to designate her as his wife; give her in marriage to his son; or release her (Ex. 21:8-11).

to the sabbath/jubilee slave release. These persons were permitted to do those things which were necessary to make themselves presentable for the public ceremony.

4. The Fallow Year

The fallow year is discussed most frequently as the Seventh Year. The tractate Shebiith (the Seventh Year) is a concentrated study of the cultivation of the land and the proper use of the produce which grew during that year.[1]

Peah 6:1 is part of a discussion of gleaning with specific reference to the "Forgotten Sheaf". Here the fallow year is referred to as "the Year of Release", but the context makes it certain that the fallow year is intended. This same "year of release" terminology for the fallow year is found in Aboth 5:8-9, and in Rosh ha-Shanah 1:1.[2] In addition to these references, the seventh year (referring to the fallow year or sabbath year) is mentioned fifty-six times in the Mishnah.[3]

5. Land Restitution

References to the jubilee land restitution occur only in a secondary way, but we assume this concept to be necessary background for the

---

[1] Reference to the seventh year (meaning the fallow year) occurs 108 times in Shebiith by our count.

[2] The Rosh ha-Shanah 1:1 reference has broad meaning, the Aboth 5:8-9 text is more specific and says that neglect of the seventh year fallow is the cause of pestilence.

[3] Kil. 1:9; Dem. 3:4,6; Ter. 2:3, 10:4; Maas. 5:3,8; M.Sh 5:5; Hal. 2:2, 4:7; Bikk. 2:6; Pes. 4:2; Shek. 2:2, 4:1; Sukk. 3:11; Betz. 4:7; R.Sh. 1:8; M.Kat. 1:1,2,4; Ned. 4:5; Sot. 7:8; Gitt. 5:9; B.M. 9:10; Sanh. 3:3; Eduy. 5:1; Bekh. 4:8,10; Arak. 9:1; Chol. 18:7; Nidd. 6:8; Yad. 4:3. Each reference is cited only once, but in many cases the word appears more than once in the reference. This listing also excludes the 108 occurrences in Shebiith (see note 1 above).

inheritance discussions which occur in a number of tractates.[1] Of these, Bekhoroth 8 and Baba Bathra 8:1-8 have the most significant content.

Bekhoroth 8 concerns itself with the inheritance rights of the firstborn, while Baba Bathra 8 deals more specifically with the inheritance rights of women. The daughters of Zelophehad (Num. 27, see above p. 62) are used as a precedent for the rights of women. Considerable detail is given in determining an equitable distribution.

Arak. 9:3-8 has a discussion of the redemption of city property. Great care is taken to define precisely what is considered "city property", as well as the definition of Levitical rights (see Lev. 25:32). It has already been noted that city property was redeemable within one year of the sale (see above, p. 39). A further procedure is given in Arak. 9:4 for redemption:

> "Beforetime the buyer used to hide himself on the last day of the twelve months so that the house might be his forever; but Hillel the elder ordained that he (that sold it) could deposit his money in the Temple Chamber, and break down the door and enter, . . ."

6. The Developing Use of Isaiah 61

We have already noted the significance of Isa. 61:1-2 in the gradual shift of jubilee theology from man's activity to God's responsibility (see above, p. 73f). Since Isa. 61:1-2 plays a critical role in the Lukan use of jubilee, it is necessary to identify the rabbinic development of this theme as part of the jubilee discussion.

Sanders cites the work of A.M. Heiman[2] who records nine references

---

[1] Dem. 6:8-10; Ket. 5:7, 6:1, 8:6, 9:11; B.B. 4:9; Arak. 3:2; 7:1-5, 8:5

[2] A.M. Heiman, Sefer Torah, ha-ketubah veha-mesorah 'al torah nebi'im veketubim, ad loc. a work which was unavailable to me. Hebrew writings which are cited below are as in Sanders, p. 87ff.

to Isa. 61:1 and five to Isa. 61:2. Half of these are just passing references of no particular significance, so we shall note only those which are pertinent to our study.

Zohar II, 136b: The souls of the just enter paradise, and at a given moment, after a sabbath promenade, recite either Ezek. 1:21 or Isa. 61:1. The Zohar has a particularly mystical emphasis, thus the use of Isa. 61:1 indicates a spiritual (in contrast to a literal) interpretation of the text.

The Mekilta to Ex. 20:21 cites Isa. 61:1[1] to establish the great humility of Moses while also making the connection that the eschatological Moses will be involved in doing the things given in Isaiah.

Abodah Zarah 20b states that humility is the greatest expression of piety. Thus the humble (poor) will receive the reward given in the message of the Herald. Here again the emphasis is shifting from 'poor' as an economic condition to 'poor' as having primary spiritual meaning.

Isa. 61:1 is cited twice with Isa. 32:14 and 60:22 identifying the Holy Spirit in relation to the redemption of the End Time. These are in Midrash 'Ekah to 3:50 (73a) and Yalqut Mechiri. It is also linked with Num. 25:12 along with Mal. 3:1 in describing the mission of Elijah when he will announce the arrival of the End Time and the appearance of the Messiah.

Sanders then notes that three of the six rabbinic traditions which use Isa. 61:1-2 relate it to the eschaton. It is not always treated with a strict messianic interpretation, but it was used eschatologically. Thus, what had originally been an exilic text referring to an historical event became in some rabbinic traditions an eschatological reference.[2]

---

[1] Num. 12:2, Isa. 66:2 and Ps. 51:14 are also cited.

[2] Sanders, p. 88.

C. THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

There is a sharp difference between the emphasis found in both literature and practice of the area religious cultures and that of the Qumran community. The Dead Sea Scrolls represent a minority faction within Judaism having a more strict and radical interpretation of the law. Other Jews of the day observed the shemittah but ignored the jubilee cycle. Leaney believes that the sect at Qumran shared with the writer (or writers) of the Book of Jubilees a profound concern to reverse this trend by re-instating the jubilee cycle. They believed that the end of the present jubilee period would see the liberation of the true Israel and the restoration of God's worship by God's people.[1]

1. Jubilee

The most significant text of the Dead Sea Scrolls for our purpose is the Melchizedek Scroll (11Q Melchizedek). It is an eschatological midrash which presents Melchizedek as the heavenly messenger, bringing deliverance on the Day of Atonement at the conclusion of the tenth jubilee cycle. The relevant portions of the text are as follows:[2]

> line 2 - In this year of jubilee ye shall return every man to his possession.
> line 3 - Every creditor shall release that which he lent to his neighbour; he shall not exact it of his neighbour nor of his brother because he has proclaimed God's release.

---

[1] A.R.C. Leaney, The Rule of Qumran and Its Meaning, (London: SCM, 1966), pp. 103-104. G.R. Driver, The Judean Scrolls (Oxford: Blackwell, 1965), p. 122 notes the similarity of Essenes and Therapeuts who observed a special 49 day worship cycle based on jubilee, but he does not believe that the two groups are synonymous.

[2] The text is as given by de Jonge and van der Woude, "11Q Melchizedek and the New Testament", NTS 12 (1965-66), pp. 303-304.

line 6 - (Melchizedek) will bring them back to them, and he will proclaim liberty for them to set them free, and (to) make atonement for their sins.
line 7 - in the last year of jubilee—that is—the 10th year of jubilee . . .
line 9 - for that is the time of the acceptable year of Melchizedek . . . .
line 26 - He shall cause the alarm trumpet to be blown in the seventh month.

This text indicates that the jubilee function had been given to the heavenly messianic deliverer. Thus it was no longer the responsibility of the people to celebrate jubilee among themselves, for the task of jubilee had been given to God's redeemer, and when he comes, he will perform jubilee upon the people of God.

A second shift in emphasis is seen in the addition of the spiritual element of forgiveness of sins to the duties of the one who announces jubilee. But this messenger of good tidings only announces the event, he himself does not actually bring it into being.[1]

A third change is the addition of the prophet concept to the king and high priest models for the Messiah. This prophet is joined to the "prophet like Moses" motif by the phrase "anointed by the Spirit" in line 18. This concept is picked up by Jesus in Lk 4:18.

Miller says that Isa. 61:1-2 stands behind this 11Q Melchizedek text. It provides the eschatological context for the pesher of the jubilee year, suggesting the themes of favour and vengeance, around which Melchizedek is developed. In this way, three major texts (Lev. 25:13; Isa. 52:7 and Ps. 82:1-2) unfold their inner meaning for the community, using Isa. 61 as the common link. Miller argues with those who call 11Q Melchizedek a pesher on Isa. 61:1-2 since the latter is itself part of a pesher comment. He sees the function of Isa. 61 in

---

[1] deJonge, p. 306.

this document as being a piece of contemporizing of apocalyptic exegesis. The Isa. text is not just enriching biblical material, it is "woven into the fabric of the community, and is in fact its formative element".[1]

The comparison of Luke's description of the Messiah (Lk 4:18-19) with this 11Q Melchizedek fragment indicates that there was at least close similarity of theological pattern. The messenger, anointed by the Spirit, proclaimed salvation, and that salvation was centered in obedience which was, in turn, described in jubilee terminology. The kingdom was announced, but it was only for those who were faithful. In 11Q Melchizedek the emphasis is not so much on the person as on the message which was proclaimed. In Luke, the two were united more closely into a totality where person and message are virtually one and the same.

The Community Rule, Col X has a discussion of precepts for the Master. In a portion which discusses seasons, the mention of jubilee is included:[2]

> "the seasons of years to their weeks (of years)
> and at the beginning of their weeks for the
> season of jubilee."

In the Damascus Rule Col XVI there is a reference to the "Book of the Divisions of the Times into their Jubilees and Weeks" which describes the times to which Israel has now turned a blind eye.[3]

---

[1] Merrill Miller, "The Function of Isa. 61:1-2 in 11Q Melchizedek", JBL 88 (1969), p. 469.

[2] All subsequent references to the Dead Sea Scrolls are from G. Vermes, The Dead Sea Scrolls in English (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976).

[3] This is a reference to the Book of Jubilees, which had been written only a short time before the Damascus document.

2. Debt Release

Concern for the poor runs throughout the Qumran materials, but a specific detail for action is given in the Damascus Rule XIV. All members gave two days earnings each month to a fund from which the community took care of "the poor and the needy, the aged sick and the homeless . . . , the virgin with no near kin . . . ." This compares quite favourably with Lev. 25:25 & 49. In jubilee laws the "near kinsman" was the guarantee of hope and security. By means of this fund, the Qumran community took upon themselves the responsibility of the near kinsman for those who had no such relative.

3. Slave Release

The Damascus Rule XIV also speaks to the issue of slave redemption. The two days per month earnings which were contributed to the fund also went to "the captive taken by a foreign people" (cf Lev. 25:47). The jubilee laws do not specifically speak of redeeming those taken captive by a foreign power, but it is a very small step beyond redeeming those owned by the "stranger with you". Since it is very unlikely that any kind of subsidy could be given to a slave serving a foreign master (as the fund provided subsidy for the poor and needy, etc.), this reference must be understood as meaning full redemption of slaves taken captive by foreign powers through war.

The Genesis Apocryphon XXII tells of an incident when Abram went out to rescue Lot from the King of Elam (Gen. 14):

> "Abram returned all the possessions and all the captives and gave them to the King of Sodom: He freed all the captives from this land who were with him . . . ."

We find this mention of freeing of the captives to be significant, for it is much more prominent in terminology than is the freeing of the

captives in the Genesis account itself. Emphasis is given here to the manner in which even Abram was obedient to the law. The fact that the law had not yet been given only makes the point of obedience more significant. It makes this aspect of the law even more crucial, for it shows that Abram lived in obedience to this law even before it became law.

4. The Fallow Year

There is no mention of the fallow year in a strict sense in the Dead Sea Scrolls; however, a statement in the War Scroll, Col. II, does indicate that the sabbath year was still remembered. A forty year "war" is being discussed, and the involvement of men from every tribe is being envisioned. But certain restrictions are laid out:

> "But they shall arm no man for entry into the army during the years of Release, for they are Sabbaths of rest for Israel."

D. PHILO

Two treatises of Philo have particular interest for our study. Special Laws and On the Virtues each give an explanation of the motives behind the jubilee legislation. Both treatises are written in a theoretical style, thus neither speaks to the issue of actual observance.

Book II of Special Laws contains a division which deals with the subject of reverence. It has a strong concern for the place of the number seven in divine order. After a lengthy discussion of the sabbath day, Philo introduces the following sabbath year themes:[1]

a) cancellation of debts every seventh year - xvii (71)

b) borrowing, lending and charging interest - xvii (73)

---

[1] All Philo references are from the appropriate volumes of Loeb Classical Library, (London: Heinemann, 1937).

c) release of slaves in the seventh year - xviii (79)

d) treatment of slaves - xviii (83) This contains a probable reference to Lev. 25:53 instructing owners to "deal with him as your hired servant".

e) release of slaves without hesitation - xviii (84) The owners are to be generous, giving the freed slave something from each of his various kinds of property (85). This is a reference to Dt. 15:13, and the motive given is humanitarian, as it will keep the slave from falling back into slavery.

f) fallow year - xviii (86-89) Three reasons are given for its observance: i) to honor the number seven; ii) to be familiar with some hardship; iii) no one has the right to burden down another man.

g) land release - xxi (104-109) The reason given is to benefit the poor. Philo explains that this is an ancient custom which through long familiarity has won its way to the standing of nature.

Then Philo turns to the jubilee. Referring to Moses, he says:

> "while laying down this first foundation . . . he built upon it by adding years to the number of seven times seven and consecrating the whole of the fiftieth year." (xxii - 110)

Regulations for land return are spelled out in xxii (111-114). But Philo adds a note. The land is to be recovered

> "at the price which he (the seller) got for it, and not to occasion a loss to the purchaser who helped him at the time when he needed it."[1]

This is followed by a contrast of redemption procedures for rural and city houses, and by regulations for Levitical holdings - xxii (116-121).

Philo combines the seventh year and the fiftieth year in his comments

---

[1] This is not in harmony with the Lev. 25 regulations which give a declining value to the land as the jubilee year approaches.

on slave release. Release is to be given "either in the seventh year from the beginning of their slavery, or in the fiftieth year" xxii (122). Philo sees the seven year term as individually fixed for each slave. The fifty year cycle is universal and the slave is to be released "even if only a single day (of slavery) has elapsed" xxii (122).

On the Virtues mentions some of these same items again. Lending money at interest is forbidden - xiv (82). The poor are guaranteed access to the fields during the fallow year - xix (97). In referring to the jubilee year, Philo says:

> "in all the rules prescribed for the fiftieth year, do we not find the utmost height of humanity?" xix (97).

Philo notes the procedures used to identify the slave who had chosen to remain with his master after the seven years of slavery were over, as recorded in Ex. 21:5-6. He writes:

> "He shall be brought to the tribunal of God and with God as judge shall have his request ratified, having first had his ear bored with an awl that he may not receive the divine message of freedom of the soul."[1]

Philo mentions the concept of restitution in Decalogue, where he speaks of the "fiftieth year" in which is accomplished the restitution (ἀποκατάστασις) of inheritance to the families which originally possessed them, and calls it "a very necessary procedure abounding in humanity and justice".[2]

The writings of Philo show a strong emphasis upon helping the poor as a form of reverence before God. On occasion his analysis creates

---

[1] Philo, On the Cherubim, Bk II (72).

[2] Philo, Decalogue, (162-164).

minor problems, particularly in the seventh and fiftieth year slave release, for rather than seeing one as having replaced the other, he places them simultaneously in history. He also has an extreme concern to relate as much material as possible to the number seven. He shows little obvious concern about harmonizing the Lev. and Deut. regulations. He unites sabbath and jubilee regulations, implying a forty-nine year jubilee, but says that it is the fiftieth year. Philo's discussions are helpful in that they show that the jubilee laws were still being discussed in legal circles, but he does not provide any data which can be used to prove whether or not any of these laws were actually being observed.

E. JOSEPHUS

In the writings of Josephus there are seven references which can be identified with the sabbath year laws and two references identified with the jubilee laws. He specifically notes jubilee legislation in Ant. III (281).[1] Josephus begins with a reference to Moses, saying that he wrote these laws before entering the promised land. The seventh year fallow observance is associated with the seventh day rest for the people, with the further comment that the spontaneous growth of that year was open to all.

He then moves directly into a discussion of the jubilee, combining the sabbath year and the jubilee year regulations from both Leviticus and Deuteronomy. Referring to Moses as the lawgiver, he says:

> "this practice was also to be observed at the end of the seventh week of years. This is the period amounting to fifty years in all, of which the fiftieth year is called by the Hebrew Jobel; at

---

[1] All references to Josephus are from the appropriate volumes, Loeb Classical Library (London: Heinemann, 1934-1967).

> that season debtors are absolved from their debts and slaves are set at liberty . . . . Now too he (Moses) restores estates to their original owners after the following fashion . . . ."
> (Ant. III.282-283).

Then Josephus gives details for calculating the price to be paid in redeeming the land at the jubilee. The persons meet and agree on a price based on the past productivity of the land. There is some confusion here, for the biblical account explains how to determine the redemption price if the land is redeemed before the arrival of the jubilee. In the jubilee year itself, there is no "buying back" of the land, for it returns to the owner with no cost involved (Lev. 25:26-28). Josephus has confused the jubilee restoration with the procedure for the pre-jubilee redemption where payment is made on a specific schedule. He also refers to "yobel" saying that it means "liberty" (an error most likely due to the common usage of the "year of the yobel" and the "year of release" in an almost interchangeable manner). He concludes with a discussion of houses in a town (Ant. III.285).

This confusion by Josephus over the redemption of land supports our belief that the jubilee was no longer observed in any literal manner. If it were still a current practice, it is very unlikely that Josephus would have made this basic error. We do not believe that the redemption procedure would have changed as Josephus describes it.

Later, Josephus makes a statement which is hardly objective. In speaking of the Jewish attitudes towards these laws, he says:

> "certainly there is not a Hebrew who does not obey the laws laid down by Moses . . . , even though in violating them he could escape detection."
> (Ant. III.317).

North says that it is improbable that he would have said this if the jubilee laws had been systematically and universally ignored. At the

same time, if there had been an impressive example of obedience, Josephus would have described it.[1]

Ant. IV.273 has the other reference to the jubilee laws, noting slavery regulations in particular. The slave is to serve for six years, and then to go free at the beginning of the seventh year. If he should decide to stay with his master, he is to be released with his family in the fiftieth year.

There are other references in Josephus which are of an historical nature, citing situations where the fallow field aspect of the sabbath year laws was observed. These present a problem in dating the sabbath year cycle which will be examined later as we look at chronology.

Ant. XI.338 tells of a delegation of Jews who met with Alexander, asking him to "remit their tribute in the seventh year, saying that they did not sow therein." Wacholder says that this delegation did not meet with Alexander himself, but with a subordinate official. They were successful in their plea and the remission was granted.[2]

Ant. XII.375f describes the siege of Jerusalem by Antiochus V Eupator. In explaining why the city fell, Josephus says:

> "Their supply of food, however, had begun to give out, for the present crop had been consumed, and the ground had not been tilled that year, but had remained unsown because it was the seventh year, during which our law obliges us to let it lie uncultivated." (377-378)[3]

---

[1] North, Sociology, p. 85.

[2] Wacholder, "Calendar", p. 160. The claim that they met with Alexander himself was intended to impress the reader with Jewish access to the authorities of the day.

[3] This same incident is recorded in Jewish Wars I.60, and in I Macc. 6:49-54. The siege was actually led by Lysias, as Antiochus was very young. The effects of the sabbath year eventually led to the end of the siege.

Ant. XIII.230ff tells of an attempt by John Hyrcanus to gain the release of his mother and brothers (who had been captured by Ptolemy and taken to the fortress city of Dagon). Josephus says that Hyrcanus failed to take the city because every time he came near to it, Ptolemy would torture members of his family. But Josephus also blames the coming of the fallow year,

> "in which the Jews are wont to remain inactive, for they observe this custom every seventh year, just as on every seventh day." (XIII.234)

Ant. XIV.202 reports a decree by Gaius Caesar that Jews should pay the tax for the city of Jerusalem every year except the seventh year,

> "which they call the sabbatical year, because in this time they neither take fruit from the trees nor do they sow."

The successful siege of Jerusalem by Herod is described in Ant. XIV.475ff, and again the fall of the city is blamed on the coming of the sabbath year. Josephus explains:

> "they were suffering from hunger and lack of provisions because it so happened that at this time of year it was the sabbath year."

After taking the city, Herod added to their troubles:

> ". . . . for on the one hand their greedy master, who was in need (of food) was plundering them, and on the other hand the seventh year, which came around at that time, forced them to leave the land unworked, since we are forbidden to sow the earth in that year." (XV.7)

References to the sabbath year in Josephus create a basic problem in chronology. North claims that Josephus connected the fallow year hardship with certain historical events in order to provide a reason for military setbacks, and at the same time glorify Jewish observance of the Torah.[1] We believe that there is a more realistic solution. It involves

---

[1] North, "Maccabean Sabbath Years", Biblica 34 (1953), p. 514

a proper understanding of the relationship between the seventh and the eighth years. During the seventh (fallow) year, the people had a relatively normal supply of food as they consumed the harvest from the sixth year (just as in every year, this years food comes from last years harvest). There was some special storage of food for the eighth year, since there was no harvest during the seventh year. But the critical food problem developed during the eighth year when the stored food had been consumed and the new harvest had not yet reached maturity. Josephus frequently misdates the sabbath year due to his belief that the critical food period coincided with the sabbath year, when in actual fact it occurred during the following (or eighth) year. Thus in Ant. XIII.240; Ant. XIII.378; Ant. XIV.475; Ant. XV.7; and War V.420-442 he incorrectly refers to the sabbath year as being the year of critical hunger. But when we properly identify the food hardship with the eighth year, the sabbath year is moved back by one year and many of the chronological difficulties presented by Josephus disappear.

Josephus wrote as an historian, and his application of the fallow year to certain historical events leads us now to examine whether or not it is possible, by using these and related I Maccabees references (which were noted above), to construct a consistent sabbath year cycle for this period of history. Since the sabbath year cycle is based upon a very standard seven year interval, by dating certain known events, it should be possible to construct a complete cycle, dating the intervening years as well. We have also shown that the jubilee cycle was originally based upon the seven year sabbatical cycle. Therefore, the sabbatical cycle must be constructed before the jubilee cycle can be determined. We turn now to the construction of a consistent sabbath year cycle based upon the references found in this Intertestamental literature.

F. THE SABBATH YEAR CYCLE

Wacholder and Strobel each claim that the sabbath year cycle was strictly observed in post-exilic Judaism. Wacholder says that it was "uninterruptedly observed", while Strobel says that observance was "drastic enough so that a mistake in the calculation of the sabbath year, and also of the jubilee year would be unthinkable."[1] But the task of actually pinpointing this seventh year is difficult because it differed from both the civil and the religious calendars of the period. Wacholder says:

> "the civil-religious year was based on a calendar beginning with the 1st Nisan, while the sabbath year, being agricultural, was based on a 1st Tishri calendar."[2]

Thus this sabbath year calendar was not used (except by a few radical sectarians) for reckoning time. But the Shemittah was such an important institution that it directly affected the gradual shift of the New Year from Nisan to Tishri.[3]

Additional problems in determining the sabbath year cycle come from the way in which Josephus records them (see above, p. 103). But North overstates the dilemma as he says:

> "the 'historical sabbath year' exhibits internal

---

[1] Wacholder, "Chronomessianism, the Timing of Messianic Movements and the Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles", HUCA 46 (1975), p. 203; A. Strobel, "Die Ausrufung des Jobeljahres in der Nazarethpredigt Jesu; zur apokalyptischen Tradition, Lk 4:16-30", BZNW 40 (1972), p. 45. But it is not that simple. Neither Wacholder nor Strobel agree on the same set of dates. We were unable to find any two charts which agree on dating the sabbatical cycle. See also A. Rutherford, Treatise on Bible Chronology (London: Institute of Pyramidology, 1957), pp. 204-209.

[2] Wacholder, "Calendar", p. 155

[3] Wacholder, "Calendar", p. 156

> inconsistencies which invalidate their use as a norm for chronology."

and again:

> "It should be abundantly clear that the sabbath year dates of Josephus are either palpably incommensurate, or else insolubly obscure."[1]

We do not share his pessimism. We recognize the problem, but believe that our solution suggested above makes it possible to develop an accurate sabbath year chronology from Josephus which harmonizes perfectly with other available data from the period.

1. The Siege of Bethsura and Jerusalem

(I Maccabees 6:48-63 and Jewish Antiquities XII.375-381)

After the death of Antiochus in 164 BC, Philip was appointed vice-regent and made tutor to young Antiochus V Eupator. But Lysias seized the nine year old king and assumed full power, then invaded Judea. He divided his army, laying siege to both Bethsura and Jerusalem. Bethsura quickly collapsed because (among other reasons) they were short of food. I Macc. 6:49 explains that the shortage was because it was the sabbath year for the land. Jerusalem, however, fought the invaders. But finally, they too had to come to terms with Lysias.[2] Josephus explains that the ground had not been tilled because it was the seventh year, and that many people had fled due to lack of food (Ant. XII.378).

The date for this siege of Jerusalem by Lysias is given as 163 BC.[3] Both Josephus and I Maccabees identify this as being the seventh year, saying that the lack of provisions had a direct affect upon the fall of

---

[1] North, "Maccabean", p. 503 and p. 511.

[2] Lysias initiated the settlement because of an attempt by Philip to regain power at home, and because the invaders were also short of food.

[3] Jeremias, Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus, (London: SCM, 1969), p. 14; also E. Schürer, The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (Edinburgh: Clark, 1973), p. 166; and Wacholder, "Calendar", p. 163.

the city. Because of this statement, Josephus dates the fall of the city during the sabbath year of 163/162 BC.[1]

We agree that the city fell in 163 BC, but we do not agree that this means 163/162 BC was a sabbath year. We believe that this represents an incorrect assumption by Josephus regarding the food supply. If 163/162 BC had been the sabbath year, food from the 6th year would still be in normal supply. Since the food supply was critically short, we can rightly assume that the sabbath year was 164/163 BC, that the normal 6th year crop had been consumed during the seventh year and that now, going into the eighth year (163/162 BC) food was critical. Josephus (Ant. XII.378) says that the present crop had been consumed and the ground had not been tilled that year. We take this to mean that the food supplies were exhausted, and "that year" refers to the sabbath year just past. On the basis of these observations, we identify 164/163 BC as the sabbath year.

The proper chronology for this event therefore, stands as follows: Antiochus died in 164 BC. Israel was observing the sabbath year from Oct. 164 BC to Oct. 163 BC when Lysias set up his siege of Bethsura and Jerusalem. Because of the siege the cities did not have access to the spontaneous growth which normally supplemented their supply of stored grain for the sabbath year. Thus, the stored grain was rapidly consumed (Ant. XII.377) and hunger had set in even more quickly than usual. This is supported by Ant. XII.380 which says that the invaders were also having food problems (since there were no crops to pillage and they had

---

[1] see editorial note in Loeb edition of Josephus, Ant. XII. 378, note a. Wacholder, "Calendar", p. 187 follows this dating.

access only to the limited spontaneous growth). Thus we conclude that 164/163 BC was the sabbath year referred to in Ant. XII.378 and in I Macc. 6:49,53.[1]

2. The Murder of Simon the Hasmonean

(I Maccabees 16:14-21 and Jewish Antiquities XIII.228)

I Macc. 16:14-16 records that Simon was killed in the month of Shebat 177 SE.[2] The event is recorded in Josephus, but is not dated. Simon's son John then attempted retaliation, attacking the fortress city of Dagon (Ant. XIII.230). During the siege it is reported that "there came around the year when the Jews are wont to remain inactive, for they observe this custom every seventh year" (Ant. XIII.234). Hyrcanus (supposedly because of the sabbath year) lifted the siege.

From this, one normally assumes that the sabbath year came one year after the death of Simon, which would mean 178 SE (135/134 BC). This is seemingly supported by Ant. XIII.236 where we are told that Antiochus invaded Judea again during the first year of the rule of Hyrcanus.[3] John Hyrcanus had difficulty defending the city because their provisions were rapidly consumed (Ant. XIII.240). When the Feast of Tabernacles came around (15-22 Tishri = early Oct.), the two sides came to terms.

---

[1] This date is also supported by the chronology of II Macc. 13. Wacholder admits that either 164/163 BC or 163/162 BC are possible dates for the sabbath year. He says that the evidence is not conclusive. He, however, later chooses 163/162 BC. Wacholder, "Calendar", p. 163 and chart on p. 187.

[2] SE = Seleucid Era. For conversion of Seleucid dates to BC dates, we are relying on Schürer's chart, pp. 607-611.

[3] Here the dates of Josephus do not fit together. He also says that it was the 162nd Olympiad as well as the 4th year of Antiochus. The 4th year of Antiochus and the 1st year of Hyrcanus do coincide at 135/134 BC, but the 162nd Olympiad comes several years later (132-128 BC). See Schürer, p. 608.

We construct the following chronology for these events:

Simon was killed in Shebat 177 SE (Feb. 135 BC). Hyrcanus then retaliated against Dagon, but had to withdraw. The reasons given by Josephus are: a) pity for his mother and brothers; and b) the coming of the sabbath year. But the sabbath year did not legally restrict the waging of war as Josephus implies ("the year when Jews are wont to remain inactive" Ant. XIII.234); in this he is incorrect.

Antiochus Sidetes invaded Judea in Tishri (Sept.-Oct.) 135 BC. It was during the first year of the rule of Hyrcanus (which ended in Feb. 134 BC) and before the coming of the rains of Pleiades (which came in Nov. - Ant. XIII.237). This siege continued for very nearly a year, until the Feast of Tabernacles in Tishri 134 BC (Ant. XIII.241). Thus, the siege coincided with the first year of the new sabbath year cycle, which was the most difficult year with regard to food supplies. That this actually happened this way is supported by Ant. XIII.240 which reports rapidly declining food supplies and widespread starvation, which led Hyrcanus to expel much of the non-essential population.

Facing starvation, seeing the approach of the planting season, and knowing the utter futility of facing yet another year with no crops (this would be the prospect unless they were able to plant their crops at the beginning of the ninth year), Hyrcanus accepted the oppressive peace terms which were offered (Ant. XIII.246-247).

Working backwards through this chronology, we conclude that the siege finally ended in Tishri 134 BC. The siege began in late Tishri 135 BC and thus paralleled the eighth year, which was the year of hunger and hardship. This leads us to the conclusion that the sabbath year was 136/135 BC.

3. Herod's Conquest of Jerusalem

(Jewish Antiquities XIV.465 to XV.8)

The date for Herod's conquest of Jerusalem is given as 37 BC by virtually all historians. There is substantial disagreement as to the exact time within that year, with Josephus himself providing some conflicting data.[1] Schürer and the Loeb editors of Josephus prefer July 37 BC as the date for the final collapse of the city defenses, while North favours June of that year, and Wacholder supports October.[2]

The more difficult problem is dating the sabbath year which occurred at that time. Ant. XIV.476 in describing the siege of the city speaks of "a sabbatical year which happened to fall at that time." This implies a sabbath year of 38/37 BC. However, in Ant. XV.7, Josephus describes the actions of Herod after taking the city by saying:

> "on the other hand, the seventh year which came round at that time, forced them to leave the land unworked . . . ."

This seemingly supports a sabbath year which began after the city had fallen, which would mean 37/36 BC.

Our chronology for this event is as follows:

Herod laid siege to the city during the Spring of 37 BC, and the city fell in the summer (June-July) of 37 BC. After taking the city, Herod imposed heavy tax burdens upon the people (Ant. XV.7) who, after having suffered horribly through the siege, now had to face the difficult eighth year with its critical food shortages. We believe that the reason

---

[1] Jewish War V.398 says the siege took six months; Jewish War I.351 says it lasted until the 5th month; Jewish Antiquities XIV.487 says until the 3rd month; Jewish Antiquities XIV.476 give a total of 55 days for the siege. The discrepancies may refer to different stages of the collapse.

[2] Schürer, p. 287; Loeb editors of Josephus, Ant. XIV.476n; North, "Maccabean", p. 505; Wacholder, "Calendar", p. 166

Josephus mistakenly identifies this as the seventh year (Ant. XV.7) is because of the critical food shortage. But in actual fact, it should be seen as the eighth year.[1] 38/37 BC was the sabbath year, during which Herod took the city. In the following year (37/36 BC, the eighth year) he added to their existing hardship by plundering what meagre food they had left, and by invoking harsh taxes. We understand Ant. XV.7 as an explanation of the severity of Jerusalem's conditions which were heightened by the previous years' fallow fields. Thus it is our conclusion that 38/37 BC was the sabbath year.

4. The protest Against the Statue of Caligula

(Jewish Antiquities XVIII.261-272)

Emperor Caligula ordered that a statue of himself be erected in the temple at Jerusalem. The Jewish population learned of his plans and engaged in forty days of determined protest (Ant. XVIII.271).[2]

Caligula was murdered in Jan. 41 AD.[3] Thus the order for the statue had to be placed during (or before) 40 AD. The probable date can be located more precisely by statements from both Philo and Josephus, although there is disagreement as to the exact timing. Josephus tells us of the Jewish protest to the order, and dates the protest by noting that it went on for forty days, during which time they neglected their fields, even though "it was time to sow the seed" (Ant. XVIII.272). This would have

---

[1] Wacholder, "Calendar", p. 167 notes the two Josephus references and says that both cannot be right. He then chooses 37/36 BC for the sabbath year. The Loeb editors of Josephus acknowledge the problem. Ant. XV.7 gives 37/36 BC as the sabbath year, but they admit that Josephus may have placed it a year earlier. Editorial notes at both Ant. XIII.378 and XIV.475 see the problem, but explain it as a "slip in arithmetic" or as "inexact language".

[2] Jewish War II.200 gives 50 days of protest.

[3] Schürer, p. 398.

been in Nov.-Dec. of 40 AD, or shortly before the death of Caligula. Philo indicates that the protest took place at harvest time (de Leg. 249). This would have been April or May 40 AD. The difference is only a few months, but it is critical. We do not believe Josephus allows sufficient time in his chronology for all the events to take place. Schürer is correct when he notes that one or two months were required for sending messages between Jerusalem and Rome.[1] The Philo chronology (which Schürer follows) is much more realistic and further serves to intensify the protest made by the Jewish people to Petronius. The Jews were prepared to sacrifice this year's harvest in order to carry out the protest, even though they knew there would be no harvest next year, since it was a sabbath year.[2]

Our chronology of this event is as follows:

Word of the Caligula order to erect the statue reached the city of Jerusalem in the Spring of 40 AD. The Jews protested for forty (or 50) days in April-May 40 AD, forsaking their harvest of grain, even though it was doubly critical due to the coming sabbath year. Petronius saw the intensity of feeling on the part of the Jewish people, so he promised to write to Caligula (Ant. XVIII.283). He then urged the Jews to end their protest and get their crops harvested. This would have been near the end of the harvesting season, in late June 40 AD. The sabbath year began in Sept. 40 AD, and in Jan. 41 AD Caligula was murdered and the issue was dropped. Thus 40/41 is the sabbath year.

---

[1] Schürer, p. 397

[2] We see the Josephus "error" as his own explanation of the seriousness of the protest. He knew it occurred before the death of Caligula, and that the Jews had neglected their fields, so he assumed (incorrectly) that it was during the planting season, when in fact it was during the harvest season. We favour the Philo chronology for the additional reason that he lived through this period as an active leader, and was personally involved in a delegation to Caligula on another matter.

5. The Second Temple is Destroyed

(Jewish War V and VI)

Josephus tells the story of the fall of Jerusalem in great detail, from the collapse of the first wall on 7th Artemisius (Iyyar = 25 May), to the burning of the temple on 10th Lous (10th Ab = late July),[1] to the ultimate defeat of the city on 8th Gorpiaeus (Tishri = 26 Sept.) 70 AD. In telling the story, he deals at length with the extreme food shortage which confronted the people inside the city (War V.420-442). This coincides accurately with a statement in Seder 'Olam Rabbah 30, 74a-75a which says that the second temple was destroyed in a post-sabbatical year.[2] Knowing that the temple fell in late July 70 AD, this means that 68/69 AD was a sabbath year. These three items (the fall of the city, the severe food shortage and the Seder 'Olam statement) combine to support the following chronology for this event:

The sabbath year was observed in 68/69 AD. The food problem, which was critical even in the best of times, was made horrific by the Roman siege blockade of the city from May to Sept. 70 AD (the eighth year) when the city finally was destroyed. Thus we conclude that 68/69 AD was the sabbath year.[3]

---

[1] Rabbinic tradition dates this one the evening before, 9 Ab (Mishnah Taanith 4:6).

[2] as cited in Wacholder, "Calendar", pp. 171-172.

[3] Wacholder contests this chronology, using War IV.537 as proof. "Simon . . . marched into Idumaea . . . where he gained abundant booty and laid hands on vast supplies of corn." (Here, as on several other places, Wacholder mis-identifies his source. It should be War IV.529.) He says that this proves 68/69 AD could not have been a sabbath year because there would not have been vast supplies of grain on hand. We disagree, believing instead that this further supports a 68/69 AD sabbath year. The Jews would have stored additional grain from the normal 67/68 AD harvest in order to carry them through the 68/69 AD sabbath year as well as into the start of the 69/70 AD eighth year. There would have been large corn supplies just as Josephus said. See Wacholder, "Calendar", p. 176.

6. A Calendar of Sabbath Years

The sabbath year operated on a strict seven year cycle beginning in the month of Tishri. Therefore, in order to be accurate, each of the dates given above must fit into a clear seven year cycle. It is also possible, working from those sabbath years which are known, to determine the intervening sabbath years. On this basis, the individually proven sabbath year dates are further tested:

1. 164/163 BC is the sabbath year for the siege of Bethsura.

2. 136/135 BC is the sabbath year for the murder of Simon. This is a difference of 28 years, which is equal to 4 seven year cycles.

3. 38/37 BC is the sabbath year for Herod's conquest of Jerusalem. This is a difference of 98 years (from No. 2), which is equal to 14 seven year cycles.

4. 40/41 AD is the sabbath year for the Jewish protest against the statue of Caligula. This is a difference of 77 years (from No. 3), which is equal to 11 seven year cycles.

5. 68/69 AD is the sabbath year for the fall of Jerusalem. This is a difference of 28 years (from No. 4), which is equal to 4 seven year cycles.

Thus the sabbath year cycle as proposed for each of these dates is given additional validity through their precise inter-dependence. Having determined these dates, we can now construct the following cycle of sabbath years:

171/170	87/86	3/2 BC
164/163 - Bethsura	80/79	5/6 AD
157/156	73/72	12/13
150/149	66/65	19/20
143/142	59/58	26/27
136/135 - Simon	52/51	33/34
129/128	45/44	40/41 - Caligula
122/121	38/37 - Herod	47/48
115/114	31/30	54/55
108/107	24/23	61/62
101/100	17/16	68/69 - Jerusalem falls
94/93	10/9	75/76

G. THE JUBILEE CYCLE

Having determined the cycle for sabbath years, we look now to the question of whether or not the jubilee cycle can be constructed to fit over the sabbath year cycle. In our study of jubilee in the Old Testament, we concluded that the jubilee had moved from literal obedience to theological hope. We further found that in the Intertestamental literature this emphasis continued to gain support. This does not mean, however, that the jubilee was ignored in the reckoning of time. There are several references which support the belief that although it was not observed, the jubilee year was calculated if only for its theological significance.

11Q Melchizedek gives importance to the jubilee proclamation which it says will come on the Day of Atonement at the end of the 10th jubilee cycle.[1] Wacholder argues that the existence of the jubilee-based chronology in the Book of Jubilees shows that the jubilee cycle was still known in Intertestamental times.[2]

In the Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 97b, Rab. Judah is said to have been informed by Elijah that the world would exist for not less than 85 jubilees (4250 years, using a 50 year cycle), and that the Messiah would come in the last one.[3]

---

[1] Vermes, Dead Sea Scrolls, p. 266.

[2] Wacholder, "Chronomessianism", pp. 217-218.

[3] Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin II, I. Epstein, ed. (London: Soncino, 1935), p. 658. We recognize that the Talmud is later than the period under discussion. The presence of this theme in the Tamud indicates that it was still alive, since the basic theme had been begun much earlier.

There have been various attempts at constructing a jubilee cycle. Rutherford created a cycle which he ended at 572/571 BC, saying that this was the last jubilee to be observed.[1] Wacholder develops a jubilee cycle based on Dan. 9 which gives 34/35 AD as the jubilee year closest to the public ministry of Jesus.[2] Strobel follows a similar approach based on Dan. 9. We have already noted that Strobel identified 457/456 BC as a sabbath/jubilee year.[3] Working with Dan. 9, he develops a jubilee chronology. Seventy weeks of years (Dan. 9:24) equals ten jubilee cycles which is 490 years, with the final week (Dan. 9:27) beginning in 26/27 AD. He then uses Lk 4:25 to support a ½ year-week ministry for Jesus (roughly 3-3½ years). On this basis, Strobel concludes that the jubilee cycle can be traced through history, and he designates 27/28 AD as a jubilee year.[4]

We recognize the validity of the theological midrashic chronologies developed by both Wacholder and Strobel. But we are not convinced that it is possible to date the jubilee year cycle on the basis of this evidence. Midrashic chronologies are heavily influenced by theological persuasion and are often written to support that persuasion. Thus they lack the ring of

---

[1] Rutherford, pp. 324, 329 and 412. He begins a new sabbath year cycle with 534/533 BC, and from this gives 26/27 AD as a sabbath year. Then he constructs a seven year ministry for Jesus using concepts taken from Dan. 9. The final "week" in Daniel is divided into two 3½ year halves. The first is from 26-29 AD and the Messiah is present on earth, but is not known. The second half is 29-33 AD and involves a 3½ year public ministry. Unfortunately, Rutherford does not provide any documentation for his material, thus its usefulness is severely limited.

[2] Wacholder, "Chronomessianism", p. 218. He builds his cycle on the basis of theological midrash, and not on "historical" evidence.

[3] see above, p. 60, n. 3. Strobel identifies 458 BC as the year when Zedekiah returned to Jerusalem. He works backwards from 26/27 AD to prove this date.

[4] Strobel works with a 50th year jubilee, so that he labelled 26/27 AD as a sabbath year, then concluded that 27/28 AD was the jubilee year.

objective historicity and are suspect in their ability to prove historical documentation for a given year of the jubilee cycle. Strobel's use of this method is attractive theologically, and it does serve to highlight the importance of the jubilee year in Jewish theology. But we remain of the conviction that it is not possible to construct a jubilee cycle, nor to prove that any specific year during the Intertestamental or New Testament period was in fact a jubilee year.

H. CONCLUSIONS

Our study of the literature of this period has provided sufficient evidence of the presence of the jubilee theme to indicate that its concepts were still present in Jewish religious beliefs. This tradition had been kept alive throughout the period and on into the first centuries of the Christian era (as shown by its presence in the Mishnah). But the treatment give it by Philo and Josephus demonstrates that it was by then a non-observed ancient tradition, the details of which were becoming more and more confused.

The exception to this was the seventh year fallow and the practice of debt release. We have shown that there is sufficient evidence in both Josephus and I & II Maccabees to support the claim that the fallow year was being observed with some degree of integrity. From this evidence we have been able to construct a consistent sabbath year cycle covering the Intertestamental period as well as the early years of the New Testament period. We have also shown that the creation of the prozbul by R. Hillel indicates that debt release was being observed (but with sufficient abuse so that its continued practice was being threatened).

Slave release and land restitution had become at best merely symbolic ceremonies, having little depth in actual legal observance. These occasional public ceremonies made it possible for the people to "obey" the laws while in effect disregarding their full social impact.

Jubilee and its related themes were given messianic significance and were pushed off into the future. Present observances were being spiritualized so that the language was still there, but the literal meaning of the words was lost. Israel no longer considered themselves to be responsible for the observance of jubilee, for jubilee had become an activity of God upon them. It was now God's responsibility to be faithful to his word and to bring in the jubilee age for his people. The responsibility for obedience was upon God, not Israel, and they lived in anticipation of that great future event when they would be set free and their land would be returned to their own control.

This emphasis is further seen in the use of Isa. 61:1-2, where three of the six rabbinic traditions which use the text give it future significance. What had begun as an exilic text referring to a specific historical situation had now become (in some rabbinic traditions, at least) a solidly futuristic reference. By this time the interpretation of the event assumed that the event itself was to be a future occurrence brought by the hand of God.

Thus we conclude that the first century Jewish people knew the jubilee terminology, and would recognize it when they heard it, but that their interpretation of its meaning for themselves had undergone severe adjustment. It had moved from being their response of obedience to God for what He had done, to being a spiritual event which God would bring about for them sometime in the future.

CHAPTER III

JESUS PROCLAIMS THE YEAR OF JUBILEE

We have followed the theme of jubilee through the Old Testament and Intertestamental Literature, showing the gradual shift in interpretation which it received. In the first sermon preached by Jesus (as reported in the gospel of Luke), Jesus uses an Old Testament jubilee text and applies it to his own ministry. Some recent writers have even claimed that the theme of jubilee is vital for understanding the ministry of Jesus.[1] Thus a series of critical questions are forced upon us: What is Luke trying to say through the use of this story in this prominent location in his gospel? Is the jubilee theme, in fact, present as writers have claimed? From what source (or sources) did Luke receive the story, and what changes

---

[1] To cite all the sources at this point would be to anticipate the bulk of our study. Sojourners (a monthly periodical produced by the People's Christian Coalition, Washington, D.C.) July-Aug. 1976 reported a specific call for jubilee living, plus a jubilee Bible Study, and noted that "increasing focus is being given to the significance of the jubilee year". p. 33. But jubilee had received considerable attention before the turn of the century: M. Henry, Exposition of the Old and New Testament, v.V, (London: Bohn, 1851), p. 415: "Christ came to sound the jubilee-trumpet . . . ."; J. Thompson, Exposition of the Gospel According to St. Luke (Edinburgh: Black, 1849), p. 150: "The 'acceptable year of the Lord' . . . refers to the year of jubilee."; P. Schaff, A Popular Commentary on the New Testament, v.I, (Edinburgh: Clark, 1879), p. 372: "The year . . . when the Lord is gracious, not without a reference to the year of jubilee."; H. Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, Pt. 1, v.II (Edinburgh: Clark, 1880), p. 26: "The year is an allusion to the year of jubilee, as an inferior prefigurative-type of the messianic redemption."; Plummer, The Gospel of Luke, ICC (Edinburgh: Clark, 1898), p. 121: "It is obvious that both figures, the return from exile and the release at the jubilee admirably express Christ's work of redemption."; J. Exell, The Biblical Illustrator, Luke, v.I, (London:Nisbet, n.d.) has an extended and insightful study of the jubilee, pp. 440-441. The recent resurgence in interest stems primarily from the work of Yoder and Trocmé.

did he make in constructing his final account? Does the story give jubilee a central or peripheral role? Will the theme of jubilee serve to unite the various and even seemingly contradictory elements in the account? If the year of jubilee is present as the central element in this important event, what are the Christological implications that are raised?

In this pericope, Luke records an event to which he gives special importance. Jesus returns to his hometown, goes to the synagogue where he reads an Old Testament text, then preaches a sermon based on what he had just read. Each of these items (the return, the text and the sermon) support the theme of jubilee as having central significance for Jesus as he began his public ministry. Luke's use of the story in this location shows that he understood its importance and wanted to give it prominence in his gospel.

The story is told in Luke 4:16-30 as follows:

16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up;
and he went to the synagogue, as his custom was, on the
sabbath day. And he stood up to read; 17 and there was
given to him the book of the prophet Isaiah. He opened
the book and found the place where it was written,
18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
19 to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."
20 And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant,
and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were
fixed on him. 21 And he began to say to them, "Today this
scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." 22 And all
spoke well of him, and wondered at the gracious words which
proceeded out of his mouth; and they said, "Is not this
Joseph's son?" 23 And he said to them, "Doubtless you will
quote to me this proverb, 'Physician, heal yourself; what we
have heard you did at Capernaum, do here also in your own
country.'" 24 And he said, "Truly, I say to you, no prophet
is acceptable in his own country. 25 But in truth, I tell
you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah,
when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when
there came a great famine over all the land; 26 and Elijah
was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land
of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. 27 And there were
many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha;
and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian."
28 When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled

with wrath. 29 And they rose up and put him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw him down headlong. 30 But passing through the midst of them he went away.

A. THE CONSTRUCTION OF LUKE 4:16-30

At the very beginning of his gospel Luke notes the many accounts of the ministry of Jesus which were circulating, and indicates his own intention to study all things carefully in order to write an accurate account. This long opening sentence (Lk 1:1-4) alludes to research of sources and events which resulted in careful preparation of his materials.

The existence of sources behind Luke's gospel is not contested, but there is little unity in the analysis of which source is responsible for a given passage (or even portion of a passage) in Luke.

The Nazareth pericope demands special consideration of the sources which lie behind it. It appears to have basic similarities with the story which is recorded in Mark 6:1-6, yet it is radically out of place according to Mark's structure, and it includes some rather fundamental differences in detail.

The issue is over how Luke constructed this pericope. Was he following Mk. 6:1-6, expanding the story on the basis of other materials which he had available to him, then relocating it according to his own theological purposes? Or was he adhering closely to another source, which here, as on several other occasions, he seemed to prefer over Mark, so that the content and location are determined primarily by this special source? Or is it a combination of sources, with no one source being the controlling element? If the pericope is the result of the combination of several sources, is it possible to determine what portions came from what source?

The importance of these questions is recognized by Anderson as he says:

> "If we could be perfectly sure that Luke 4:16-30 represents a free Lukan rendering of Mark's gospel, we would be instantly on the trail of Luke's own theological point of view."[1]

1. The Location of the Pericope

The location of the story in Luke stands in striking contrast to its position in both Matthew and Mark. The reasons given for this Lukan location range from factual — "unquestionably contains the first proclamation of Jesus in his hometown"[2], to theological — "the location shows that Jesus would not win universal acclaim and serves to prepare the way for the more encompassing rejection which is ahead."[3]

The discussion of location is affected by one's beliefs about sources. Those who hold to a non-Markan source for the pericope tend to assume that the story was located at this point in that source, therefore Luke followed it in preference to Mark. Those who hold to a basic Markan source need to explain why Luke would take this account from its normal place (according to Markan order, it belongs between chapters 8 and 9 of Luke) and move it forward to the beginning of the gospel.

Bultmann proposes that the story has no basis in actual fact, but is a theological creation of the early church community which was taken over by Luke.[4] But Bultmann is rather alone with this point of view. Brun

---

[1] H. Anderson, "Broadening Horizons, The Rejection at Nazareth Pericope in Light of Recent Critical Trends", Interpretation 18, No. 3, (July 1964), p. 270. See also H. Conzelmann, The Theology of St. Luke, (London: Faber & Faber, 1961), p. 32 for a similar statement.

[2] Strobel, "Ausrufung", p. 38.

[3] N.B. Stonehouse, The Witness of Luke to Christ, (London: Tyndale, 1951), p. 91.

[4] R. Bultmann, The History of the Synoptic Tradition, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1968), p. 31.

finds the whole picture of Jesus appearing in the synagogue to be so realistic that the memory of such a service where Jesus was the reader-preacher must certainly lie behind it. He then theologizes about the incident's historicity and location by speculating that Jesus most likely preached in a synagogue somewhere using this text and actually saying the things which are recorded here. Luke transferred this from its true geographical location to the town of Nazareth, thus also making the shift from its true textual location to the beginning of the gospel. His purpose is so that the unbelieving response of the Jews and the corresponding shift to include Gentiles will stand out even more vividly against the brilliant background of the announcement of the gospel in his own home town.[1]

Hill agrees with this basic approach, but sees no reason to move the rejection scene from Nazareth, since it is quite likely that Jesus did read and preach in the service there. It is unlikely, however, that the rejection happened so early in the ministry.[2]

Stonehouse sees Luke selecting from a variety of actual possibilities to construct this account. He tries to bridge the differences with Mark by suggesting that there may have been two Nazareth rejections, one coming at the beginning (Luke) and one coming near the end of Jesus' ministry (Matthew and Mark).[3] When Luke came to the second rejection account in

---

[1] L. Brun, "Der Besuch Jesu in Nazareth nach Lukas", Symbolae Osloenses Fasc. Suppl. IV, (Osloae: Serta Rudbergiana, 1931), p. 16. See also F. Spitta, Die Synoptische Grundschaft und Ihre Überlieferung Durch das Lukasevangelium, (Leipzig: Scholl, 1912), pp. 49-52.

[2] D. Hill, "Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth", VT 13 (1964), p. 171.

[3] Stonehouse, p. 76. The possibility of multiple rejections is pushed even further by Ragg as he finds three Nazareth rejections. His reasoning is that v. 22 implies an earlier rejection (but he does not explain how he comes to this conclusion), Matt. 13 and Mk 6 both imply that the disciples were present thus giving parallel reports of the third rejection, while Luke gives the second rejection, for the disciples are not included. L. Ragg, The Gospel According to St. Luke, (London: Methuen, 1922), p. 61. We can find no evidence to support Ragg's conclusions.

Mark he simply omitted it in the interest of brevity since he had already included the earlier event. He chose to include the first rejection rather than the second one because this one fits best in giving a summary of the major features from the claims of Jesus. This should be seen as only illustrative and not necessarily literal material. Luke does not mean to imply that Jesus began his Galilean ministry at home. The decision to include the story here is based on theological, not chronological grounds. But then Stonehouse cautions against interpreting this event as being programmatic in content, because in spite of all that it does contain, it does not sum up the distinctive witness which Luke makes to Jesus. He claims that the whole point of the narrative is missed if what happened at Nazareth is seen as disclosing the leading motifs of the gospel. The words are indicative of the message of Jesus, but the actions and response are underscored as being quite unrepresentative. It is only with much exaggeration, he concludes, that one could see the Nazareth story as being programmatic, for the scriptural quotation treats only the proclamation and ignores the actual defeat of the enemies of God. The use of the proverbs (vv. 23-24) clearly implies that it was as a prophet that Jesus was not accepted at Nazareth.[1]

Lightfoot gives the passage strong symbolic importance in its location. The rejection does not appear as tragedy nor failure because it is not final. It is given as the opening of the door to a wider witness to the Gentiles. This makes the rejection into a stepping stone for the extension of witness, certainly not the end of it. Luke is more interested in the inclusion of the Gentiles than in the rejection of the Jews, but this rejection is necessary in order to move out to the Gentiles. In contrast with Mark, where the call to repentance is based on the nearness of the kingdom, here in Luke the call is moved from the future to a present

---

[1] Stonehouse, pp. 88-89.

salvation which is found in Jesus himself.[1]

Eltester accepts the general concept of thematic material within this pericope, but he explains the location and emphasis on the basis of the changing attitude of the synagogue toward Jewish Christians. During the years following 70 AD, more and more pressure was applied on the new Christians by the synagogue leadership. This led to the insertion of a curse into the twelfth benediction which made it impossible for Christians to participate in the synagogue services.[2] Luke knew of this change in attitude (Lk 6:22) and decided to sharpen his theme showing the movement of the gospel away from the Jewish centres to a wider Gentile world. So he took the Nazareth scene away from its original setting and fitted it into this more prominent location. The account was then intensified so that it became a preview of Christ's ministry and death. Eltester goes on to claim that the transition to a new location solves a second problem as well. The introductory verses (4:14-15) are crude and not quite adequate in bridging from the temptations to the Nazareth incident, yet their content is supported by the other evangelists. The opening sentences of the pericope fit well with what precedes them, but the remainder of the events from this "first synagogue service" do not harmonize with the opening phrases. By means of this transition Luke sets the tone for his gospel, making a point about Jewish rejection, and at the same time exposes his main ideas at the beginning of his witness. Eltester believes that this scene is crucial for a proper understanding of Luke's theology of Jesus.[3]

---

[1] R.H. Lightfoot, History and Interpretation in the Gospels, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1934), pp. 198-203.

[2] "May there be no hope for the apostate, and mayest thou speedily uproot the insolent government in our days. And may the Nazarenes (Jewish Christians) and the Minim (Jewish heretics) die in a moment, may they be blotted out of the book of life and not be enrolled with the righteous. Praised be thou, Lord, who dost humble insolence." E. Lohse, New Testament Environment, (London: SCM, 1974), p. 163.

[3] W. Eltester, "Israel im lukanischen Werk und die Nazareth-perikope" BZNW 40 (1972), Jesus in Nazareth, p. 145.

A strong messianic apocalypticism is to be seen behind the story, according to Strobel. Luke took this scene and from his own knowledge of the experience brought it alive by adding detail. He takes this first public appearance and uses it to explain the ministry of Jesus as reaching back into a long tradition which had the proclamation of the Messianic Year of Jubilee as its basic content. This reflects the "fulfilled time" of Mark 1:15. The incident was moved to the beginning of the gospel to alert readers to its presence as a continuing theme throughout Luke's gospel.[1]

Conzelmann also sees the incident as having been placed here because of its thematic content, but he identifies different themes. He sees the intersection of three essential themes which join together in building Luke's primary concern for the concept of election: 1) preaching and rejection—at home, 4:16-30; 2) miracles and acclaim—elsewhere, 4:31-44; 3) miracles and call—of strangers (non-Nazarenes), 5:1-11. These all point to faith as being the basis for membership in this new kingdom which Jesus announced. Luke maintains the link with Jewish religious history by saying that Jesus ἐδίδασκεν ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς αὐτῶν . At the same time he notes that Jesus did not go beyond Galilee and Judea. The one journey to Gadara is clearly noted to be the exception.[2]

Tannehill agrees that the presentation of thematic material accounts for the location of the pericope, but he believes that these themes focus primarily on the Isaiah text. The incident becomes a method for showing certain fundamental aspects of the ministry of Jesus. The scene does not simply relate the details of one event among many other events, for its words and actions are typical and programmatic in the mind of Luke. The

---

[1] Strobel, "Ausrufung", p. 40. In an earlier article, "Das Apokalyptischen Terminproblem in der sogenannten Antrittspredigt Jesu", TLZ 92, (1967), pp. 251-254, Strobel pursues this same theme.

[2] Conzelmann, Luke, pp. 32-33. See also Anderson, "Horizons", p. 72; F.W. Beare, The Earliest Records of Jesus (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), p. 91.

early location is an indication of the seriousness of the theological point which is being made. It is important for Luke to have the twelve disciples present for all the ministry of Jesus (Acts 1:21-22) and so for Luke to have broken one of his own guidelines indicates that the themes introduced here must indeed have special importance.[1]

It is our conclusion that Luke is responsible for the placement of this story in this early, prominent location. The verses leading into the pericope do not mesh smoothly with the story itself. The absence of the disciples (Mk 6:1 implies that the disciples were with him, while in Luke they have not yet been selected); the reference to the Capernaum ministry; and the intensity of the reaction (vv. 28-30) all indicate that the story has been brought forward by Luke. The reason for the transfer is Luke's own theological perspective as he sees in this story a major theme which he believes is important in understanding Jesus.

2. The Structure of the Pericope

Before moving to an examination of the various source possibilities for this story, we should note the structure of the pericope itself. As will be shown in the study of sources, many see this pericope as an example of very poor organization. Some even question whether it has any internal structure at all, while others find in it a very detailed and specific structural organization.

---

[1] R. Tannehill, "The Mission of Jesus According to Luke 4:16-30" in BZNW 40, Jesus in Nazareth, (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1972), p. 51. He sees this same kind of reporting being done in Acts 13:13-52. See also Schürmann, "Zur Traditionsgeschichte der Nazareth perikope Lk 4:16-30" Mélanges Bibliques in hommage au R.P. Beda Rigaux, (Belgique: Duculot, 1970) p. 202. R.T. France, Jesus and the Old Testament, (London: Tyndale, 1971), p. 134. W. Grundmann, Das Evangelium nach Lukas (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1964), p. 119.

One possible way of structuring the pericope is to follow its logical progression, seeing "pieces" which have been put together in rather rough form:

vv. 16-17 - The Setting
vv. 18-19 - The Isaiah Quotation
vv. 20-21 - The Sermon
vv. 22-27 - The Response
  v. 22 - the initial response
  vv. 23-24 - the prophet-physician proverbs
  vv. 25-27 - the Elijah-Elisha illustrations
vv. 28-30 - The Rejection

This form has very little internal structure, thus it is easy to challenge the basic inter-relatedness of the various pieces.

Quite a different structural form is identified by Lund. Vv. 16-20 are divided into three sections: A, B, A'. "A" consists of vv. 16-17 and describes Jesus' actions before reading the scripture. The central section "B" is vv. 18-19 which is the scripture that he read. "A'", which is vv. 20-21, describes the actions of Jesus after completing the reading. The words used in "A'" are seen to be antithetical and in inverted order when compared with their parallel terms in "A".

Then Lund goes on to explain the changes in the Isaiah quotation itself by using chiastic terms. "To heal the brokenhearted" (Isa. 61:1) is eliminated by Luke because it has no parallel or corresponding line. "To set at liberty those who are oppressed" (Isa. 58:6) is introduced in order to achieve parallelism. All that is demanded is the change of the verb from the imperative to the infinitive. καλέσαι is changed to κηρύξαι in the interest of parallelism. And finally, the concluding phrase of vengeance is dropped because it introduces material for which there is no parallel in the first line of the quotation. Thus Lund assumes that all the changes were made in order to have a more perfect chiasmus.[1]

---

[1] N.W. Lund, Chiasmus in the New Testament, (Chapel Hill, N.C.: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1942), pp. 236-238.

Bailey approaches the material in a similar manner, but with still more detail. In his studies in form criticism, he identifies vv. 16-20 as being Form V (two stanzas with the center of the first forming the outside lines of the second). Using this system, he structures the pericope as follows:[1]

A 1 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee
And a report went forth through the whole neighborhood about him
and he taught in their synagogues
being praised by all
And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up.

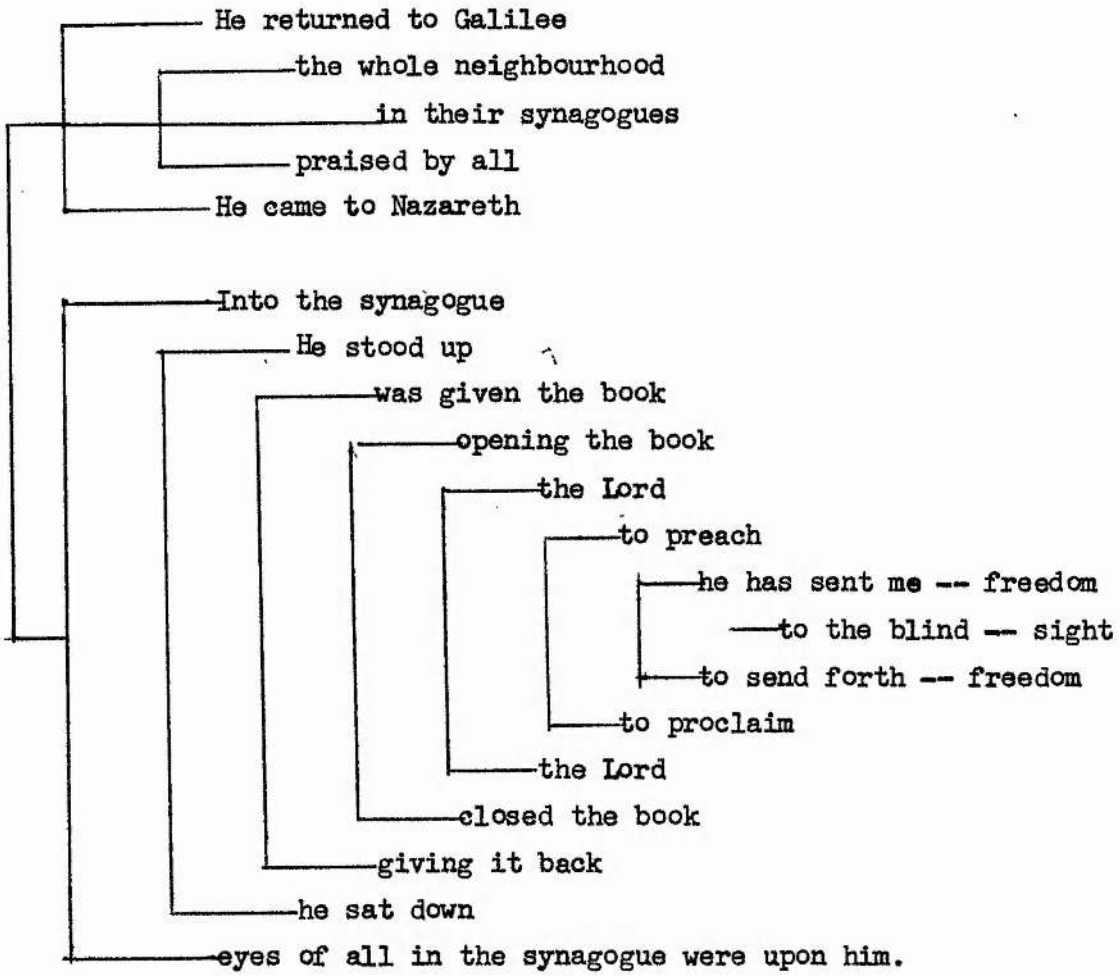
B 1 And he entered (as was his custom on the sabbath) into the synagogue
2 And he stood up to read
3 and there was given to him the book of the prophet Isaiah.
4 and opening the book, he found the place where it was written
5 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me
6 to preach the good news to the poor.
7 He has sent me to proclaim to the prisoners freedom
8 and to the blind recovery of sight
7' to send for the oppressed ones in freedom
6' to proclaim
5' the acceptable year of the Lord".
4' And having closed the book
3' after giving it back to the attendant
2' he sat down
1' and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed upon him.

In this structural form, "in the synagogue" is the center of the first stanza, and it forms the beginning and the ending of the second stanza which elaborates the details of the synagogue event. Having established this structural form, Bailey proceeds to identify the parallels which are to be found:[2]

---

[1] K.E. Bailey, Poet and Peasant, A Literary-Cultural Approach to the Parables in Luke, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), p. 68.

[2] Bailey, p. 68-69.



Crockett finds parallelism in the two illustrations from Elijah and Elisha. He feels that the Lukan formation of these illustrations shows careful and deliberate wording.[1]

a) πολλαὶ χῆραι ἦσαν
b) ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις Ἠλίου ἐν τῷ Ἰσραήλ
bb) ὅτε ἐκλείσθη ὁ οὐρανὸς ἐπὶ ἔτη τρία καὶ μῆνας ἕξ,
ὡς ἐγένετο λιμὸς μέγας ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν,
c) καὶ πρὸς οὐδεμίαν αὐτῶν ἐπέμφθη Ἠλίας
d) εἰ μὴ εἰς Σάρεπτα τῆς Σιδωνίας πρὸς γυναῖκα χήραν.

a') καὶ πολλοὶ λεπροὶ ἦσαν
b') ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ ἐπὶ Ἐλισαίου τοῦ προφήτου
c') καὶ οὐδεὶς αὐτῶν ἐκαθαρίσθη
d') εἰ μὴ Ναιμὰν ὁ Σύρος.

---

[1] Larrimore Crockett, The Old Testament in the Gospel of Luke, with Special Emphasis on the Interpretation of Isaiah 61:1-2, (Brown University, Rhode Island, 1966), p. 135.

These detailed structural forms which are advocated by Bailey, Lund and Crockett deserve serious attention. They serve as excellent cautions against those who claim that this pericope has haphazard construction. But on the other hand one needs to ask whether Luke was intentionally creating chiastic structure as he wrote. Especially is this caution valid as it relates to Lund's claim to explain all the changes in the Isaiah quotation by means of Luke's desire for chiastic balance. In our own study of the quotation, we shall show that there is a more responsible solution to that issue. But we do believe that the inverted parallelism suggested by Bailey is a form often used by Luke both within a story itself as well as in contrasting consecutive stories against each other.

3. Sources in the Construction of the Pericope

We have already shown that Luke moved this story from its original location later in Jesus' ministry. This implies that Luke found the story in material which had given it a different setting, thus one must ask the question "Where did Luke find this story?".

a) The Markan Source

The school of "Markan dependency" generally holds that Luke has taken the narrative found in Mk. 6:1-6 as a foundation for a representative and symbolic opening scene for the ministry of Jesus. Mark provides the basic skeletal framework for the story, to which Luke, adds the descriptive colour and detail. Luke is given the main responsibility for the pericope as it appears in his gospel, but its foundation is primarily from Mark.

Conzelmann believes that Luke positively identifies this account with the Markan version because there is an obvious gap in his narrative where the Markan story "should" appear. Luke, in contrast to Mark, is not writing "historical plausibility", but is setting the pattern for a

Christological expression. History is important for Luke, but he is a man of faith, not a modern secular historian. His placing of this event reflects his own understanding of its redemptive significance, therefore he felt free to modify Mark's account by inserting his own special themes into it. These additions reveal to us important Lukan motifs, but they also disrupt the compactness of the narrative. Conzelmann sees these six themes in this story:

1. The theme of promise and fulfilment.

2. The demarcation of the period of Jesus as part of redemptive history. (Conzelmann believes that Luke understood the "today" of v. 21 as already an event in past history.)

3. Luke adds the note of involving his relatives in the home town rejection scene, so that Lk. 8:19-21 is seen as the fulfilment of 4:23.

4 Luke's view of the relationship between miracle and teaching is introduced, as well as the idea of election.

5. The Capernaum motif which is linked with the choice of witnesses in the following verses.

6. The universalistic tendency. (But Conzelmann notes that Luke consistently avoids any hint that Jesus himself went beyond Jewish territory.)

Conzelmann believes that Luke found some of these motifs already present in his sources. He gathered them together and inserted them into the basic Markan narrative, giving them some addition emphasis in the process.[1]

Leaney agrees with Conzelmann in his belief that Luke transferred this story from its original Markan chronology. He says that Luke wrote the pericope as a substitute for the Markan account. He also has Luke incorporating Mark 3:31-35 where Jesus seems to reject his own family.

---

[1] Conzelmann, Luke, p. 33, 35-36.

Luke broadens the scope of the rejection to include the people of Nazareth, so as to avoid showing Jesus as being estranged from his own family. The general impression is that of a triumphant visit combined with the tradition of rejection as narrated by Mark.[1]

Kümmel takes a very similar position. He argues that Luke made Mark the basis for the composition of his gospel, and on the whole followed Mark's sequence. When he changed the order and inserted his own material into Mark's framework, he always omitted the corresponding section from Mark in order to avoid duplication.[2]

Strobel bases the pericope on Mark 6, but sees v. 21 as the Lukan equivalent of Mark 1:15, "the time is fulfilled". In an earlier work, Strobel explored this theme by postulating a Markan framework heavily stamped with an elementary messianic tradition which was current in Luke's day. He insists that the early appearances of Jesus (Nazareth included) cannot be appreciated apart from the strict apocalyptic structure of John the Baptist's message.[3]

Drury pushes Strobel's point one step further, seeing Mark 1:15 as the point of the Nazareth manifesto which is developed as a midrash into the fuller Septuagintal speech, complete with the stories of Elijah and Elisha. The element of opposition comes from the Mark 6:6 material which Luke vividly dramatizes by means of the attempt to kill Jesus. Luke uses his considerable ability as a narrator to take the hint of a proverb from

---

[1] A.R.C. Leaney, The Gospel According to St. Luke, (London: A & C Black, 1958), p. 51. It seems unlikely that Luke was really trying to avoid the family estrangement issue, since this material is included later in the gospel at 8:19-24.

[2] W.G. Kümmel, Theology of the New Testament, (London: SCM, 1972), p. 28.

[3] Strobel, "Ausrufung", p. 50; and also "Apokalyptische", p. 253.

Mark and to nurture it into a full-blown story which can be traced (in theological content) back to the Deuteronomic historian.[1]

Lightfoot sees a rather strong Markan relationship, believing that the differences are Lukan interjections or alterations made on his Markan source. He notes three places where this fundamental Markan relationship is obvious: a) the reference to the origin of Jesus; b) the concept of no prophet being acceptable; and c) the placing of the entire scene within the synagogue.[2]

Montefiore joins with those who accept a basic Markan source, but he is more forthright in rejecting the possibility of other sources as he claims that the variations and additions, as well as the transposition of the story to this new location, must be seen as the work of Luke. In this discussion, he identifies only Mark plus Luke himself as sources.[3]

Eltester also accepts this rather limited Mark-Luke combination. He sees these Lukan characteristics showing through the Markan framework:

1. The method of handling detail is unquestionably Lukan in style.

2. The emphasis upon the Holy Spirit ties the material into its context according to normal Lukan patterns.

3. He sees a Lukan stamp in the theological importance of this report for the whole of Luke's gospel.

His conclusion is that there can be no one other than Luke himself behind the final formulation of this pericope. He had to be independent

---

[1] J. Drury, Tradition and Design in Luke's Gospel, (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1976), p. 86. H. Flender, St. Luke, Theologian of Redemptive History (London: SPCK, 1967), p. 147 says that Luke makes the story "relevant" to life.

[2] Lightfoot, p. 198-200.

[3] C.G. Montefiore, The Synoptic Gospels II, (London: Macmillan, 1909), p. 872. W.R. Farmer, The Synoptic Problem (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1964) challenges the Markan priority as he argues that Mark copied from Matthew, p. 241.

of all other descriptions (other than Mark) for the construction of the final form of the story.[1]

Bultmann holds to a general Markan dependency even though he cannot find very much verbal similarity in the two accounts. He recognizes the change in location, as well as the large amount of non-Markan material in Luke's account as being the work of Luke, in order to meet his own special objectives. In spite of the differences, Bultmann believes that the overall framework is sufficiently similar to point to a Markan dependency. But in accepting this Markan connection, he argues with the detailed concern which some scholars show over source dependency. He sees this as an excellent example of how an imaginary situation is created in order to provide a setting for an independent saying which was rooted in the early missionary expansion of the church. He sees οὐδεὶς προφήτης δεκτός ἐστιν ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ as the kernel from which the whole pericope began. He believes that this proverb had its origin in the Oxyrhynchus papyrus 1:5:

> "Λέγει Ἰησοῦς οὐκ ἔστιν δεκτὸς προφήτης ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ, οὐδὲ ἰατρὸς ποιεῖ θεραπείας εἰς τοὺς γινώσκοντας αὐτόν."

This double proverb did not come from Mark's single proverb, but rather it is more likely that the Oxyrhynchus papyri proverbs are the source for Mark's shortened proverb.[2] Dibelius had originally agreed with Bultmann, but later he changed his mind because the Markan sayings contain too much special material to have come from the Oxyrhynchus original.[3]

---

[1] Eltester, p. 136. For an opposing point of view, see B.S. Easton, The Gospel According to Luke, (Edinburgh: Clark, 1926), p. 53. He says that the loose Semitic style is proof that this is not a Lukan composition.

[2] Bultmann, History, pp. 31-32. The Oxyrhynchus papyri proverbs are: "Jesus said, A prophet is not accepted in his own country, nor does a physician heal his own family."

[3] M. Dibelius, From Tradition to Gospel, (London: Nicholson and Watson, 1934), p. 110.

Easton accepts the idea of the pericope being a theological creation rather than the reporting of an actual event. The reason he gives for its development is that Nazareth was not receptive to Christian missionaries in Luke's day. Their treatment of Christians led Luke to develop the strong polemic tone which is felt in the pericope.[1] While Fridrichson agrees that the story is a creation, he gives the reason as being the need for proof that miracles were conditioned by receptive faith. This was needed to explain those situations where no miracles occurred. This incident was created to make it possible to point back to Jesus himself as having had the same dilemma. Thus the blame for any lack of specific result was removed from the preacher and placed upon those hearing the message.[2]

Within the Markan dependency school are those who hold to a much less exclusive approach, maintaining a basic identification with Mark, but seeing other sources as playing a very important role as well. In this group there is a wide variety of minor differences over exactly where specific words or phrases originated. Tannehill is representative of many within this general grouping who, while accepting the basic Markan connection, see Luke organizing material in his own special way, using things from tradition, from personal research and from other sources. This approach of trying to harmonize the differences into one cohesive story results in something that is obviously Lukan, but containing some rather rough Greek composition which is quite unlike Luke's normal flowing style. Tannehill illustrates with three examples:[3]

1. It is strange that the prophecy of Jesus in v. 23 is a quote of

---

[1] Easton, Luke, p. 54.

[2] A. Fridrichson, Die Versuchung Christi (Norsk Teologisk Tidsskrift 24, 1923-24), p. 33.

[3] Tannehill, p. 53. He insists that just because some words and phrases have Semitic colouring, they do not necessarily point to a non-Markan source unless the phrase in question is reflective of the tone of the total story.

what the Nazarenes will say. The verse would be much less awkward if Jesus had simply indicated that the Nazarenes will want him to perform some miracles at home as he had done in Capernaum. This is probably a piece of tradition which originally appeared as a challenge to Jesus from someone in the crowd. It had been transformed into a saying of Jesus either by the tradition before Luke received the story, or it may have been done by Luke himself.[1]

2. "Physician, Heal thyself" was a proverb having a rather wide general circulation. Its existence as a proverb may explain why the entire verse is given as a quotation.

3. The request which Jesus says that the Nazarenes will make is never referred to again.

b) Luke's Special Source

There are many scholars who do not share the belief that Mark is the primary source behind Luke's gospel. Streeter's proposal of a Proto-Luke continues to have some acceptance. As it affects this pericope, this view holds that all the gospels have reference to the same incident in history. The final editor of the gospel, when he came to this account as he was interpolating Mark's material into Proto-Luke, did not introduce Mk 6:1-6 because he had already told the story as recorded in Proto-Luke, which he was following quite closely.[2]

In support of this independent Lukan tradition, Brun contends that when the Lukan account is studied in isolation, it can only confirm his great independence from the Markan description. Where the two accounts

---

[1] Tannehill favours the change having been made by the tradition. The change reflects the early Christian piety which did not like having such a brusque challenge thrown at Jesus. p. 56.

[2] B.H. Streeter, The Four Gospels, A Study of Origins, (London: Macmillan, 1936), p. 209f. Also V. Taylor, Behind the Third Gospel, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1926), p. 142.

do meet, Luke has used another, special formula. Brun concludes with the bold statement that the assumption of a special source for Luke is scarcely challenged.[1]

This same Lukan independence is stressed by Caird, who says that where Luke follows Mark, he uses Mark's order. Thus, since this Nazareth pericope is not in the Markan order (it is one of seventeen places where Luke rejects Markan order), it shows that Luke is following another, more preferred source. There is, therefore, "a high degree of probability" that the Nazareth account is not a free rewriting of Mk 6:1-6, but is grounded in an independent tradition from L.[2]

Sanday has his own reasons for supporting the idea of a non-Markan source for this story.

1. There is a scarcity of Old Testament quotations in passages common to Luke and Matthew that have Q as their source. Thus it is possible that both writers found the pericope in an alternate source and adapted the materials to fit their own particular goals.

2. The introductory phrase "and he came to Nazareth" is from a primitive "Q" source.

3. The elementary sentence structure which uses the conjunction καί three times in one sentence reflects an early pre-Lukan primitive source.

4. The content and structure of v. 24 also demonstrates this primitive "Q" style.

Sanday interprets these to mean that Luke found the story already set in this position in his "Q" document, and he chose to retain the "Q" order, but inserted his alternate version in its place.[3]

---

[1] L. Brun, "Der Besuch Jesu", p. 14.

[2] G.B. Caird, The Gospel of St. Luke, (London: Black, 1968), p. 24-25.

[3] W. Sanday, Studies in the Synoptic Problem, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1911) p. 137 and also pp. 329ff.

Beare is another who sees no reason to believe that Luke drew from Mark. Luke supplied the textual quote from memory (which also explains the misquote), and then filled out the story with local colour and detail. He notes especially the furious climax to the story with its miraculous escape as further evidence of its non-Markan derivation. He calls it "simple legendary enhancement" which was added as the story circulated throughout the early church community.[1]

This departure from Mark is explained by Major, Manson and Wright as reflecting the different ways by which the evangelists received their information. Mark got his story from Peter, and they speculate that perhaps the added detail in Luke indicates that Peter may have been absent on this occasion, thus the information which he gave to Mark was sketchy and second hand. Luke, however, got his information from Jesus' own mother and immediate family, who certainly were there and would have remembered the event quite vividly.[2]

In his book, Der Markus-Stoff bei Lukas, which normally supports a strong dependency upon Mark, Schramm does no more than mention this passage in passing, because he says that it does not belong to essential Markan material. Then he makes his claim even stronger: "nor is it an example of Markan influence on a non-Markan tradition." Luke has substituted for Mk 6:1-6 a corresponding piece from his own special source. Any influence of Mk 6:1-6 upon Lk 4:16-30 cannot be proven. Schramm concludes from this that Luke had a very sharp distinction in his sources.[3]

---

[1] F.W. Beare, The Earliest Records of Jesus, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), p. 46. See also Easton, Luke, p. 54.

[2] HDA Major, TW Manson and CJ Wright, The Mission and Message of Jesus (London: Nicholson & Watson, 1937), pp. 80-82. See also O. Betz, M. Hengel and P. Schmidt, Abraham Unser Vater (Leiden: Brill, 1963), p. 108. They see the story being well known to the disciples and coming from a problem experience which Jesus had in his hometown.

[3] T. Schramm, Der Markus-Stoff Bei Lukas (Cambridge: Univ. Press, 1971), p. 37.

Schramm goes on briefly to dismiss any connection of v. 24 with Mark as simply not being there. The introduction of the prophet sayings (truly I say to you) differs from Mark and cannot possibly be a Lukan paraphrase of Mk 6:4. Luke did not insert ἀμήν by himself, since he normally translated the word, or omitted it altogether. Schramm argues that v. 24 came from a source which also lies behind the Gospel of Thomas Logion 32. The basis for this claim is that both proverbs (vv. 23 & 24) are found together in the gospel of Thomas as well as in Luke. This fact overbalances the slight variations in wording.[1]

Violet sees a different tradition lying behind Mark in contrast with Luke. Mark (and Matthew) had only the report that Jesus was unable to do any miracles in his hometown. They explain this as being the fault of the local townsfolk (no faith), and not a reflection upon the power of Jesus. But Luke, as a result of his own research, has a different tradition at hand, so he writes the story to fit his own theological purposes.[2]

While Violet agrees that this pericope has little or no relationship to our present Mark, but that it, with Mark, goes back to an older "Ur-Markus" which, except for the setting and vv. 28-30, is more faithfully represented in Luke, his approach in proving his point takes on the form of a rather detailed linguistic etymological study. He is firmly convinced that an Aramaic source lies behind the Lukan verson of the pericope, and that it exerts the major influence in its development. He cites this evidence:[3]

---

[1] Schramm, p. 37.

[2] B. Violet, "Zum Rechten Verständnis der Nazareth-Perikope, L 4:16-30" ZNW, 1938, p. 250.

[3] Violet, pp. 258-262. See also Grundmann, p. 119 who says that attempts to find the original form behind this pericope are hypothetical. So also A. Schlatter, Das Evangelium des Lukas, (Stuttgart, Palmer, 1947), p. 227; C. Masson, Jesus à Nazareth, (Lausanne; Libraire de l'université, 1961), pp. 38-69. Masson agrees that there is an Ur-Markus source at work here. G. Dalman, Jesus-Jeshua, (New York: KTAV, 1971) supposes that Jesus translated the text into Aramaic as he read, but that Luke omitted it to avoid duplication. p. 48.

1. The appearance of καί to combine sentences is found five times in vv. 16–17, and again six times in vv. 20–23. This καί construction is very Semitic in character.

2. ἤρξατο (v. 21) does not mean literally "he began", for σήμερον πεπλήρωται ... ὑμῶν is certainly not the beginning of the sermon. More likely it is a synopsis or summary of the sermon. This makes ἤρξατο a figure of speech for Luke and it should be seen as drawing attention to the main emphasis of what was said in much more detail. Violet believes that this use of ἤρξατο is not so unusual and that in all three synoptics, when used with λέγειν , it must be translated in the sense of a summary of what was said rather than as the beginning of the sermon.[1]

3. In v. 17 βιβλίον τοῦ προφήτου Ἡσαΐου appears. This is seen as coming from the Aramaic s^{e}phār standing in static construction. This same genetival word order is seen in υἱὸς ἐστιν Ἰωσήφ (v. 23) and in ἡ πόλις ᾠκοδόμητο αὐτῶν (v. 29).

4. Luke's use of ἀμήν is very rare. It occurs only six times in Luke,[2] in contrast to thirteen times in Mark and thirty in Matthew. This therefore, must be a direct carry-over from the Aramaic 'amēn.

5. The strange future ἐρεῖτε (v. 23) is explained much better as an Aramaic imperfect.

---

[1] Violet, pp. 259–260. He seems certain that shari or an equivalent Aramaic word lies behind ἤρξατο . He gives three Old Testament examples of this Semitic root used in the sense of summary: a) Ps. 119:160 where rōsh dibar^{e}kāh = ἀρχὴ τῶν λόγων certainly does not refer to the beginning of the speech, but has a summary sense; b) Ps. 139:17 where rashēhĕm = αἱ ἀρχαί αὐτῶν ; c) Dan. 7:1b rēsh millīn = ἐνύπνιον , and both words are parallel, meaning summary. See also J.W. Hunkin, "Pleonastic Ἄρχομαι in the New Testament", JTS 25 (1924), pp. 390–402 for a detailed study of ἄρχομαι . He grants that it is an Aramaic idiom, but then quotes a variety of early Greek writings which show that it also occurred frequently in Greek. Hunkin places this usage of ἄρχομαι in the doubtful category, meaning that it probably has a function other than simply "to start", but he does not say what that function is. Tannehill, p. 65 sees this as a frequent Lukan construction (12 times), and says it should not be seen as solid proof of a pre-Lukan source.

[2] Lk 4:24; 12:37; 18:17; 18:29; 21:32; 23:43.

6. The double use of εἰ μή has the Aramaic אִלָּא behind it, with an adversative function.[1]

Violet concludes his argument with a general concern that the basic confusion of words in additional proof of an Aramaic source. He feels that this source was most likely an oral report rather than being written.[2]

This concern over individual words and phrases and their respective sources becomes an overriding issue for some scholars. Easton seems to go to extremes as he works down through the passage, labelling this word as being Lukan, and that phrase as being non-Lukan. Some of his judgments are obvious, but many are much less clear.[3]

The entire discussion of Luke's Semitic character is very much an unresolved matter. The view that Luke polished up Mark's style and removed

---

[1] J. Wellhausen, Das Evangelium Lucae, (Berlin: Druck and Verlag von G. Reimer, 1904), p. 10. Also Schlatter, pp. 203-204. But Violet finds this same adversative meaning behind Ps. 130:2 in the LXX which he says has a Hebrew origin of אִם לֹא, p. 261.

[2] Violet, p. 262. He also comments favourably on Wellhausen's suggestion of confusion in the wording of Lk 4:26. He says that πρὸς γυναῖκα χήραν might have originally been πρὸς γυναῖκα Σύραν . He points to the Mk 7:26 reading in the Christian Palestinian Fragment in Damascus where the change from Aramean to Widow was made, and he asks if the same error might be found here as well since it involves the change of only one character. Wellhausen, p. 11 sees the point being that she was a Gentile, not a widow. Aramean was a religious, not a national designation. This, says Violet, supports an Aramaic base for the account. See also Klostermann and Bauer, Die Evangelien Handbuch zum Neuen Testament (Tübingen: Mohr, 1919), p. 428; Dalman, Sacred Sites and Ways (New York: SPCK, 1935), p. 51. Sparks, "Semitisms of Luke", JTS 44 (1943), p. 136 sees the entire phrase εἰς Σαρέπτα τῆς Σιδωνίας πρὸς γυναῖκα χήραν as an exact recall of I Kgs. 17:9 in the LXX. Bultmann, History, p. 32 is not sure the tradition is Aramaic, but he does acknowledge that vv. 25-27 certainly came from some corner of the tradition.

[3] Easton, Luke, pp. 53-54 divides up words as follows:

Lukan	non-Lukan
21 ἤρξατο	16 Ναζαρά εἰωθὸς
23 πάντως	18 εὐαγγελίσασθαι
24 ἀμήν	
25 ὡς γίνεσθαι ἐπὶ	
26 πέμπειν	
29 ἀναστάντες ἄγειν	
30 διέρχεσθαι	

his more crude Semitisms is balanced by the fact that some of Luke's own material shows considerable Semitic tone of its own. This would support the theory of a Hebrew or an Aramaic source behind the gospel.[1]

However, HFD Sparks argues convincingly that although Luke employed a few Semitic phrases and although he was certainly influenced by the Semitic-Greek culture of his Aramaic speaking friends, most of what people try to pass off as "Semitisms" are in fact not that at all. They are "Septuagintalisms" consciously transferred from the LXX to the gospel. In this pericope, Sparks identifies only ἦν ἀνατεθραμμένος as having an obvious Aramaic background.[2]

Leaney is also concerned about this stress upon Aramaic sources. He notes that twenty-four of the twenty-six words in the Isaiah quotation are identical with those found in the LXX.[3] Anderson states his objection to the idea of a Semitic source by reminding us that the theory of an Aramaic original behind sections of this pericope is as yet an unproven conjecture.[4] Strobel is a bit more blunt: "Violet tries with little success to prove an Aramaic source."[5] Keck also joins the critical chorus:

> "Violet has relied too heavily on the details of the account, including certain philological matters, to reconstruct even the Aramaic phrases Jesus may have used. Precisely because Luke views the scene as programmatic, he has stylized the details to make it more typical."[6]

---

[1] Anderson, "Broadening Horizons", p. 268.

[2] Sparks, p. 129ff. The UBS text has τεθραμμένος for this verse (16). For discussion of this question, see below, p. 324.

[3] Leaney, p. 54.

[4] Anderson, "Broadening Horizons", p. 268.

[5] Strobel, "Apokalyptische", p. 251.

[6] L. Keck, "Jesus Entrance Upon His Mission", Review and Expositor 1967, p. 477.

In a book published posthumously, Taylor carries on a brief dialogue with Leaney which reflects this concern for words. Leaney contends that Lk 4:16f is a Lukan rewriting of Mk 1:14f. Taylor wonders how this can be since Lk 4:16f has only five words out of a possible thirty that parallel Mk 1:14, and none that parallel Mk 1:15. When Leaney notes that Lk 4:22 reflects Mk 6:2b even though there is no word common to both texts, and that Lk 4:24 reflects Mk 6:2b as well, in addition to being a clear parallel to Mk 6:4, Taylor sees this claim as having gone too far to warrant further discussion.[1]

The question of whether the presence of a word proves the existence of a source is a very valid one. When Violet insists "without doubt" that the origin of the pericope is Aramaic, and that the only question to be asked is whether it was oral or written, one feels that he may be overstating his evidence.[2] A much more sensible statement would be that there are traces of Aramaic influence shining through the sources which Luke had before him as he wrote this particular story. We turn now to this third possibility which sees a combination of sources behind this pericope.

c) A Combination of Sources

The Proto-Luke vs. Markan dependency debate becomes more complicated when it deals with this particular pericope, for persons who normally hold to a basic Markan dependency for Luke's gospel move to a predominantly non-Markan source for this pericope, while very carefully avoiding any acceptance of the existence of Proto-Luke. They prefer to speak only of a variety of sources being available to Luke.[3]

---

[1] V. Taylor, Passion Narrative of St. Luke, (Cambridge: Univ. Press, 1972), p. 26.

[2] Violet, p. 258.

[3] Tannehill, pp. 51-75; Schürmann, "Zur Traditionsgeschichte", p. 187f; Conzelmann, Luke, p. 31-38; Eltester, pp. 76-117.

Ellis goes a bit further in his convictions about sources behind Luke:

> "Luke's own contribution must not be underrated. Luke's alteration and omission of parts of Mark show that it, no less than Q or L, is subservient to Luke's purposes. . . . The primary reason for the Markan omissions is that no one document is really the foundation for the third gospel. All the sources are quarries from which the evangelist selects and adapts material to serve his own end. The "Gospel of Luke" is a considerable achievement that in plan, as well as in publication, belongs to Luke."[1]

Schürmann becomes very articulate and very detailed in his development of this view as it affects this particular story:

> "Luke had before him a variant of the Nazareth pericope, different from the version which had been transmitted to Mark. This pre-Lukan variant was already fairly strongly edited when Luke came across it, and it had been expanded in vv. 17-21, 23a, and 25-27, especially with a Christological and Universalist interest. The basic material of this pre-Lukan story (seen behind 4:16,22,23b, 24,28-30) preserved in several places the older, more original version, over against Mark 6:1-6."[2]

This means that Schürmann's basic story is as follows:

> And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and he went to the synagogue, as his custom was, on the Sabbath day. And he stood up to read; and all spoke well of him, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth; and they said, "Is not this Joseph's son? What we heard you did at Capernaum, do here also in your own country." And he said, "Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his own country." When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. And they rose up and put him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw him down headlong. But passing through the midst of them, he went away.

---

[1] E.E. Ellis, The Gospel of Luke, (Edinburgh: Nelson, 1966), p. 26.

[2] Schürmann, "Zur Traditionsgeschichte", p. 205. "Lukas hat eine variente der auch Markus zugekommenen Nazareth-Perikope (Mk 6:1-6) vorgefunden. Diese vorlukanische Variante war schon stärker redigiert, also sie Lukas vorfand, und---vor allem in christologischem und universalistischem Interesse--um vv. 17-21 (23a) un vv 25-27 erweitert. Der Grundbestand jener vorlukanischen Perikope (hinter Lk 4:16,22,23b,24, 28ff) bewahrte an nich wenigen Stellen gegenuber Mk 6:1-6 die altere Fassung." Masson, p. 50 hints at this same thing. He says that 4:16-21 came from an old tradition which Mark had reduced, while Luke kept the older, longer form.

This story was composed as an analogy to Mk 1:14,21-28,32-39 and 6:1, then presented as a "Bericht vom Anfang". The introductory verses (14-15) are preserved rudiments of different traditions of the same story, thus assuming that by the time they got to either Mark or Luke, they had already taken on several different forms.[1] Schürmann proposes that light can be brought to the subject if we can: a) uncover the clearly recognizable expansion elements of the pericope; b) examine the question of a possible Lukan origin for these expansion elements; and c) ask which is the expansion and which is the redaction. He then works through the text with a detailed analysis in order to prove his points.[2] Schürmann's conclusions are that Luke had before him a source which was also available to Mark, plus both Q and his own source L. These were combined so that the final story has elements of many different strains, and needs to be attributed to Luke's own hand for its final appearance.

4. Evaluation and Conclusions

Three basic approaches to the sources behind the pericope have been described: Markan dependency; Lukan special source; and a combination of sources. These three have their own distinctions, but they also have substantial areas of overlap.

a) The Markan dependency group appears too narrow and too defensive at two points: 1. Limiting Luke almost solely to Mark (Montefiore, Eltester, et al.) seems unnecessary and leaves one having to stretch for solutions regarding certain elements of the story which do not fit into the Markan account. 2. Pulling in additional passages from Mark in order to explain the expansion in Luke (Leaney, Strobel, Drury) appears equally unnecessary.

---

[1] H. Schürmann, "Der Bericht vom Anfang, Ein Rekonstruktionsversuch auf Grund von Lk 4:14-16", TU 87 (1964), pp. 242-243.

[2] Schürmann, "Zur Traditionsgeschichte", pp. 187-188. A discussion of Schürmann's detailed work is included as Excursus B.

One needs to caution against taking a position, then searching for additional supporting evidence. One exception is the use of Mk 1:14-15, for this certainly may be part of the background material for Lk 4:21.

In addition, seeing the story as a creation for theological reasons does not deal adequately with the internal elements of the pericope, (Bultmann, Easton, Fridrichson, et.al.). Some creation is to be seen in the development of the story, but the pericope is most surely based upon an actual event, or upon a composite of actual events.

b) The Lukan special source theory has within it elements which are quite plausible: 1) the location of the pericope; and 2) certain words, phrases and themes which are not found in Mark. This could be seen to support the Proto-Luke hypothesis; however, the existence of Proto-Luke is not necessary to explain the final form of the story. There are sufficient ties with the Markan account to warrant retaining Mark as one of the sources. Simply seeing non-Markan elements in Luke's account does not imply complete separation (Beare, Violet, et.al.). Their argument that Luke is not following Mark's order, therefore he must be following another, more preferred source is deserving of serious consideration, but it removes from Luke the option of following his own theological purposes in determining where this story should be placed. Further, it has not been proven to our satisfaction, that Proto-Luke is the best solution in identifying the "other source".

Violet's evidence for an Aramaic source is well stated, for indeed the pericope does contain elements of Aramaic influence. But the presence of Aramaic flavour is not in itself sufficient basis for deciding that the entire pericope is Aramaic in origin. Violet pushes a good point much too far when he makes Aramaic influence become Aramaic source.

c) Those who hold to a variety of sources, with the location of the pericope reflecting Luke's own theological point of view (Tannehill, Marshall,

Schürmann, Ellis, et al.) appear to have the most supporting evidence and leave the fewest unsolved problems.

The pericope's construction can be adequately explained by seeing it as primarily the work of Luke, leaning heavily on his sources Mark, Q, and L. There is good evidence (with regard to this pericope) for seeing Mark not as our present Mark, but as a "pre-Mark" source which was also used by Mark in preparing his own account. The similarities with Mark occur not because Luke copied from Mark, but because both Mark and Luke had access to the same source. The source L represents a number of traditions, including at least one which reflects a strong Palestinian Aramaic flavour. This could have been either written or oral. Traces of this (and the other sources) can still be seen through the final wording, causing some roughness in the final composition. Luke then placed the story in a prominent position early in the gospel in order to introduce basic thematic materials which will reappear in the following chapters.

B. THE SELECTION OF THE QUOTATION FROM ISAIAH

When Jesus went to the synagogue in Nazareth, he was invited to be one of the readers for the day, and then to speak. Luke records that he read from the book of the prophet Isaiah. Exactly how this text was selected is a matter of some controversy. Was the selection of Isaiah 61 a conscious choice made by Jesus with the clear intention of making a programmatic announcement regarding the nature of his ministry? Or was it simply a chance happening? Was the text for that day selected by the local synagogue clerk? Or in a more established pattern, was the text pre-determined by the tradition of the Jewish Lectionary Cycle?

How the text was selected becomes significant as one attempts to understand the interpretation which was given to it by Jesus. In order

to come to a conclusion, it will be necessary to examine the text itself, and to investigate the Jewish Lectionary Cycle to determine how firmly it controlled the selection of texts during the time of Jesus.[1]

According to Lk 4:17, "there was given to him" (ἐπεδόθη αὐτῷ) the book of the prophet Isaiah. "He opened"(ἀναπτύξας) the book and "found the place" (εὗρεν τὸν τόπον) where it was written, . . . These three words or phrases will be the beginning point for our study to determine how the text was selected.

1. Exegetical Study

The text itself does not provide a definitive answer for the question of how the selection was made. Ἐπεδόθη is a common New Testament word, an aorist passive indicative of ἐπιδίδωμι . It has a general, non-technical meaning within the range of "to give, to present, to deliver, to hand over, to supply".[2] Here, its meaning is simply to describe the action of the attendant (v. 20) who handed the scroll to Jesus.[3]

Ἀναπτύξας (from the verb ἀναπτυσσω meaning "to roll back, to unroll, to unfold") appears only here in the New Testament.[4] The variant reading ἀνοίξας (from ἀνοίγω meaning "to open") is much more common. The textual

---

[1]Yoder, Politics implies that the solution to this question is important, for if Jesus chose the text himself, it would point to a self-conscious preparation for the claim with which he capped the reading. p. 35.

[2]W.F. Arndt and F.W. Gingrich, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1957), p. 292; H. Liddell and R. Scott, Greek-English Lexicon, 9th ed. rev. by H. Jones (Oxford: Clarendon, 1958), p. 631.

[3]Grundmann adds the implausible note that Jesus did not wait for the scroll to be handed to him, but instead, acting as Lord, he stood, taking the initiative. p. 121. See P. Billerbeck, "Ein Synagoguengottesdienst in Jesu Tagen", ZNW 55 (1964), pp. 143-161 for evidence that this would not be the case. It is more probable that Jesus had been asked to be one of the daily readers before the service had begun.

[4]J.B. Smith, Greek-English Concordance to the New Testament, (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1974), p. 22.

evidence is divided. ℵ, D, K, Θ, Π, Ψ, (et al.) prefer ἀναπτύξας , but A, B, L, W, Ξ, (et al) prefer ἀνοίξας.[1] Arndt and Gingrich list both words, providing the same translation "to unroll a book in scroll form", but indicating their preference for the reading ἀνοίξας in this text.[2]

The Greek texts reflect this division. Westcott and Hort, along with Nestle, read ἀνοίξας , while Tischendorf and the UBS text give ἀναπτύξας . Each group believes that their reading is to be preferred because it is the more difficult reading. Ἀναπτύξας is unmistakable in its meaning of "to unroll a scroll", thus it is suggested that ἀνοίξας is a scribal correction by one who is more familiar with opening a book than unrolling a scroll. The fact that ἀναπτύξας appears only here in the New Testament leads to doubt as to whether it would be introduced as a scribal correction of the more common ἀνοίξας. On the other hand, it is suggested that the reading of ἀναπτύξας is due to the presence of πτύξας in v. 20, and that a scribe made the change so that the two words would correspond.

The UBS Greek text reading of ἀναπτύξας is quite acceptable, recognizing that the thematic content of the passage is not affected by the use of one word over the other. Metzger gives ἀναπτύξας a low degree of certainty, but still prefers it.[3]

Εὗρεν "to find" is an aorist active indicative from εὑρίσκω . Arndt and Gingrich, LSJ, and Preisker (TDNT) all give similar meanings of: a) to find after a search, and b) to find without a search, as though to

---

[1] K. Aland; M. Black; C.M. Martini; B.M. Metzger; A. Wikgren, The Greek New Testament (London: United Bible Society, 1975), 3rd ed., p. 217.

[2] Arndt and Gingrich, p. 59 for ἀναπτύξας ; and p. 70 for ἀνοίξας - (ἀνοίγνυμι); LSJ, p. 118 for ἀναπτύξας ; and p. 145 for ἀνοίξας .

[3] B. Metzger, Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 3rd ed. (London: United Bible Societies, 1971), p. 137. It was given a "C" rating, indicating considerable doubt in the minds of the committee.

come upon accidentally.[1] Preisker adds that linguistically the word can have either meaning, but that its New Testament usage most predominantly has the meaning of "surprising discovery".[2]

Our own study of the Luke-Acts usage of εὑρίσκω does not give support to Preisker's claim insofar as it applies to Luke's use of the word. Εὑρίσκω and its derivative forms appear eighty times in Luke-Acts.[3] A study of these individual texts shows a strong preference by Luke to use εὑρίσκω in the "to find after a search" category. Fifty-seven references give the understanding of "finding as the result of a search", where the subject of the verb had something specific for which he/she was searching. Twenty-three references are judged to be accidental in that the person was not explicitly looking for the item which was found.[4] Lk 4:17 (contrary to Arndt and Gingrich, and Preisker) is placed in the "find as the result of a search" category, because in the process of preparing to read from the scripture, Jesus was looking for a text. We do not believe that it was a chance discovery of this particular text.

This decision is made on the basis of context, and is further supported by the procedures used in the Jewish Synagogue worship services. The selection of texts to be read in the regular services was not accidental. The Torah readings were developing along a distinct pattern, and the

---

[1] Arndt and Gingrich, p. 325; LSJ, p. 729; H. Preisker, "εὑρίσκω" TDNT, v. 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), p. 769.

[2] Preisker, p. 769

[3] W.F. Moulton and A.S. Geden, A Concordance to the Greek New Testament, (Edinburgh: Clark, 1899), p. 403; Also Smith, Greek-English, p. 158.

[4] These references were judged to "the result of a search"
Lk 1:30; 2:12,45,46; 4:17; 5:19; 6:7; 7:10; 9:12; 11:9,10,24,25; 13:6,7; 15:4,5,6,8,9,9; 18:8; 19:30,32,48; 22:13; 23:4,14,22; 24:3,23,33; Acts 4:21; 5:22,23,23; 7:11,46,46; 9:2; 11:26; 12:19; 13:22,28; 17:6,27; 19:19; 21:2; 23:9,29; 24:5,20; 27:6,28,28; 28:14.
These references are judged to be accidental discovery:
Lk 7:9; 8:35; 9:36; 12:37,38,43; 15:24,32; 17:18; 22:45; 23:2; 24:2; Acts 5:10,39; 8:40; 9:33; 10:27; 13:6; 17:23; 18:2; 19:1; 24:12,18.

Haphtarah readings were selected on the basis of word or phrase similarity in support of the Torah reading.

This still leaves unsolved the issue of how the text was selected. The problem is whether or not there was by New Testament times a Lectionary Cycle sufficiently established to have pre-determined the regular Haphtarah readings.

2. The Jewish Lectionary Cycle

a) The Torah Lectionary Cycle

The Jewish Lectionary Cycle was a fixed pattern of readings from the Torah (and later from the Prophets) designed to provide a systematic coverage of the scriptures on either a one year (Babylonian) or a three year (Palestinian) cycle.[1] The origin of the Lectionary is not clear. Tradition attributes the public reading of the law to either Moses, Ezra, or one of the prophets. The sifra on Lev. 23:44 "and Moses declared to the people of Israel the appointed feasts of the Lord" suggests that on each festival day, Moses instructed the people on the various laws which were connected with it.[2]

Josephus supports a Mosaic origin:

> "For ignorance he (Moses) left no pretext. He appointed the law to be the most excellent and necessary form of instruction, ordaining, not that it should be heard once for all or twice or on several occasions, but that every week men should desert their other occupations and assemble to listen to the law and to obtain a thorough and accurate knowledge of it, a practice which all other legislators seem to have neglected."[3]

---

[1] C. Roth, "Triennial Cycle", Encyclopedia Judaica, v.15, p. 1386.

[2] Danby, Mishnah, "Megillah 3.6", p. 205.

[3] Josephus, The Life Against Apion, II.175

This does not provide documentation of the age or origin of the cycle, but it does suggest that already by the time of Josephus it was an old custom.

Crockett grants that there may be some reliability to the tradition which traces the reading of the law back to Ezra. He says that the school of writers who adapted the Pentateuch had the needs of public worship chiefly in mind. If this is true, then the Lectionary Cycle would be as old as, if not older than, the final form of the Pentateuch. This would mean, says Crockett, that by the First Century, the Palestinian Lectionary Cycle would have been quite old and most likely very well established.[1]

Büchler sees the origin of the Lectionary as being in a series of disputes with heretics, primarily of Samaritan background. He says that the readings on a regular cycle were fixed by the Pharisees to assure that the truth would be established and continually reinforced in certain contested matters. The primary controversy was in Egypt around 140 BC and focused on the LXX translation which, in the minds of the Samaritans, did not deal correctly with several Pentateuchal passages.[2]

Rabbinowitz agrees with Büchler and identifies the controversy as having focused on the interpretation of Biblical commands regarding festival observances. In order to maintain their position, the Pharisees decreed that on the festival concerned, the passages would be read and explained (always giving the point of view held by the Pharisees). This

---

[1] L. Crockett, "Luke 4:16-30 and the Jewish Lectionary Cycle, A Word of Caution", JJS 17, (1966), p. 24. Philo notes that even in a time of crisis, the Jewish practice of gathering to hear the reading of the Law would go on. de Somniis II, xviii, 127.

[2] A. Büchler, "Reading of the Law and Prophets in the Triennial Cycle" pt. 1, JQR 5 (1893), p. 424.

then expanded into regular festival readings and later included minor feasts, special occasions and fasts, until over the years a fully regulated cycle of readings developed.[1]

Mann does not agree with this polemic base for the origin of the Lectionary. He observes that the regular Torah readings have been credited to a wide variety of things, including an attempt to combat against the penetration of Hellenism into Judaism, and as a apologetic against Christianity.[2]

Morris says that the evidence is far too confusing to come to any firm conclusion, but that we should probably see an emerging Lectionary cycle around New Testament times, one that guided, but did not yet control the regular synagogue readings.[3]

b) The Haphtarah Lectionary Cycle

The acceptance (even partially) of a Torah Lectionary Cycle does not solve the question regarding the selection of the passage read by Jesus. We need yet to see when and how quickly the Haphtarah gained acceptance as part of the Lectionary Cycle.

The development of a fixed Haphtarah to accompany the Seder readings was still later in coming, according to Morris.[4] But Büchler, with his early Torah development, supports an early Haphtarah development as well.

---

[1] J. Rabbinowitz, Mishnah Megillah, (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1931), p. 96. It focused on the Samaritan and Sadducean interpretation of Lev. 23:15 ("from the morrow after the sabbath") which involved proper calculation of the festival of Pentecost.

[2] J.Mann, The Bible as Read and Preached in the Old Synagogue, (New York: KTAV, 1971), p. 4.

[3] L. Morris, The New Testament and the Jewish Lectionaries, (London: Tyndale, 1964), p. 15.

[4] Morris, p. 15.

He links the development of the Haphtarah and Seder readings very closely together.[1] The Samaritans accepted the Torah, but not the prophets. The Pharisees saw that many prophetic writings could be found to support their interpretation of the Torah. The Haphtarah were added to the reading of the Law in order to give further support to the Law (by showing how other scriptures are in agreement with it) and to give credence to the Prophets (by showing their similarity with the Law).[2]

The earliest Haphtarah came from Ezekiel. Assigned to the special Sabbaths and festivals, it was recited immediately after the reading of the Torah. The Haphtarah had no significance in and of itself. Its purpose was simply to endorse the Torah lesson for the day. Originally the Haphtarah had to be of similar theme content with the portion of the Torah which preceded it. Later, the Haphtarah was selected on the basis of word similarity with the Torah reading. The agreement could be an extensive phrase, or simply a word, but it had to come very early in the Haphtarah, usually in the first line, so that the connection with the Torah would be obvious to the congregation.[3]

The instructions for reading from the Prophets are especially pertinent for our study because of the way in which the Isaiah text is quoted in Luke. These instructions are given in the Mishnah, Megillah. We note particularly iv.4 and also xxiv.a:[4]

> iv.4 He that reads the Law may not read less than three verses; he may not read to the interpreter more than

---

[1] A. Büchler, "Reading of the Law and Prophets in Triennial Cycle", pt. 2, JQR 6 (1894), p. 5

[2] A. Guilding, The Fourth Gospel and Jewish Worship, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1960), p. 20.

[3] Crockett, p. 30; See also H. Strack and P. Billerbeck, Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament Aus Talmud und Midrasch v.4, (Munich: Beck, 1928), p. 170.

[4] Danby, Mishnah, p. 205-206, and p. 146.

one verse; or in the Prophets, three verses; but if these three verses are three separate paragraphs, he must read them out singly. They may leave out verses in the Prophets, but not in the Law.

xxiv.a In the twelve minor prophets he may skip, provided only that he does not skip from the end of the book to the beginning."

Thus a Haphtarah could be read that generally fits the Seder, but which might include a verse which is not appropriate. The reader had the freedom to omit the offensive verse (or verses), skipping on to find a more appropriate concluding verse. This would have permitted Jesus to have omitted the phrase "and the day of vengeance of our God" (Lk 4:19). But it also means that Jesus could not have read from Isaiah in exactly the manner in which Luke records the quotation, since (as we will show in our study of the quotation) Isa. 58:6 is inserted into 61:1-2, and this would have involved going backwards in his reading, something that was forbidden by Megillah 24a.

Büchler says that Jesus did not have the freedom to select his own text. He believes that the Haphtarah Lectionary Cycle had developed to the point that the Clerk of the Synagogue had the responsibility of selecting the appropriate Haphtarah to fit the Seder. He asks, "Can it be free choice, if out of eight Prophetic books, only one is offered?"[1]

Guilding and Abrahams agree. Each holds to an early cycle of Lectionary readings which controlled the Haphtarah selections. They give Jesus no choice in the selection of the text. Guilding contends that Luke was intimately acquainted with the Lectionary, so that in his own reporting of the sermon and of the attempt on Jesus' life which follows, Luke is heavily influenced in his choice of words by the presence of particular words found in the pertinent Old Testament passages. Assuming

---

[1] Büchler, pt. 2, p. 12; so also Abrahams, Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels, (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1924), p. 8.

the firm existence of the Haphtarah readings in the Palestinian Triennial Cycle, then working backwards from the Haphtarah read by Jesus to the Seder which it was to expound, Guilding claims that it is possible to identify specific texts, and thus to date events by the reading of these texts. She then dates the Nazareth synagogue event as having occurred at the end of Tishri, in the first year of the Lectionary cycle.[1]

Crockett cautions against such a radical step, saying that we know from this and other sources that the prophets were being read in the synagogue services, but that we do not know if there was a set Haphtarah cycle at this time. He suggests that a synagogue official selected the book of Isaiah for the daily Haphtarah reading and gave this to Jesus, expecting him, on the basis of his own knowledge of the scripture to "find" a text with a wording appropriate to the Torah reading which had just been completed.[2]

Dalman suggests a different set of circumstances, yet arrives at a date very similar to that of Guilding. He says that at the end of the synagogue year, there were several "Consolation Sabbaths" which had, by this time, definite texts which were to be read on these sabbaths. The last lesson assigned for the Consolation Sabbaths begins with Isa. 61:10. Dalman says that Jesus was given the book of Isaiah, and that it was assumed that he would read this passage. But when he saw the beginning of Isa. 61, he immediately saw that it was a very appropriate Consolation

---

[1] Guilding, pp. 20,22 and 7. Morris vigorously objects, saying that "lectionaries do not emerge from heaven finally and perfectly formed." He feels that the Haphtarah cycle could not possibly be developed by this point in time. He notes the confusion of annual vs. triennial cycles and rejects any assumptions about a developed and accepted Haphtarah Cycle in Jesus day. Morris, p. 16. Abrahams, p. 8.

[2] Crockett, p. 27; so also J.M. Creed, The Gospel According to St. Luke, (London: Macmillan, 1965), p. 66; Caird, p. 87; Lohse, p. 166; SM Gilmour, Gospel of Luke, IB, (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1952), p. 90. E. Haenchen, Der Weg Jesu, (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1966), p. 217, Plummer, p.,120 says that the clerk selected the text, then Jesus "found" the pre-selected text and read it.

Sabbath text, and that it was quite suitable for what he wanted to say in his sermon, so he used the freedom permitted him in text selection, put aside the appointed selection and started at the beginning of the chapter instead.[1]

Strack and Billerbeck question whether Isa. 61:1 ever was an official Haphtarah:

> "The Isa. 61:1 text used by Jesus on this occasion is nowhere given as an official Haphtarah; even if Jesus had used it in this way, it would demonstrate exactly, that in his time, the Maphtir still had a free hand in the selection of the prophetic text."

It is their conclusion that Jesus took the scroll and looked for the particular text he wanted, working fully within the requirements of "word, phrase or theme" similarity with the Torah reading.[2]

Betz does not believe that the method of selecting the text is very important. He says:

> "Whether Jesus was handed the scroll and he opened it by divine control, or deliberately, or whether the passage was the allotted portion for the day is immaterial to the sermon which follows."[3]

---

[1] Dalman, Jesus-Jeshua, pp. 44-45. C. Perrot agrees that it was one of the final sabbaths before the close of the year, coming in Tishri, probably on Yom Kippur. He bases this upon the triennial cycle readings. C. Perrot, "Luc 4:16-30 et la lecture biblique de l'ancienne Synagogue", Revue des Sciences Religieuses 47 (1973), pp. 332-333.

[2] Strack and Billerbeck, Kommentar, p. 170 "Die von Jesu dazu benützte Stelle Jes. 61:1f ist aber niemals eine offizielle Haphtarah gewesen; hat sie Jesu gleichwohl also solche verwendet, so beweist das eben, dass zu seiner Zeit der Maphtir in der Auswahl des prophetentextes noch freie Hand hatte."

[3] Betz, p. 108; Ragg, p. 17 hedges, saying that the selection was not accidental, it was either a fixed lesson or one of his own choosing. Wellhausen, Evangelium says that Jesus found it immediately and accidentally, p. 9; but Grundmann moves beyond "accidental" and says that Jesus found the text in a miraculous way. p. 121.

3. Conclusions

On the basis of this study, the initial conclusion that εὗρεν means in this context "to find after a search" is supported. It indicates that the selection of the specific passage was made by Jesus. There is an absence of hard evidence to support the existence of a firm Haphtarah Lectionary Cycle during the time of Jesus. It is quite likely that certain Haphtarah texts were being associated with specific Torah texts, thus a Haphtarah cycle was beginning to take shape, but it did not yet control the Haphtarah readings in the Synagogue services. The content of the text and the application made by Jesus would support Dalman's proposals of a Consolation Sabbath text, but we have already shown that Luke transferred this incident from another setting, thus attempts to date the exact Sabbath when this occurred is, in our judgment, not possible. We do believe that such studies do capture the intention of Luke by connecting the text and the sermon with the beginning of the Jewish Synagogue year.

We conclude that the Synagogue clerk made the selection of the Isaiah scroll and handed it to Jesus, expecting him to choose an appropriate scripture which would support the Torah reading that had just finished. Jesus then selected Isa. 61:1-2 for the Haphtarah reading and based his sermon upon that text. Luke understood the full impact of the text selected by Jesus, recognized its implications, saw its direct connection with the beginning of the Sabbath year, so he brought it forward as an appropriate and "accurate" incident with which to begin the public ministry of Jesus.

C. THE QUOTATION FROM ISAIAH

1. The Source and Formation of the Quotation

The quotation from Isaiah which Jesus read as the Haphtarah for the day basically follows the text of the LXX. As it appears in Lk 4:18-19,

it is somewhat complicated, in that there is: 1) an omission of five words from the middle of verse 1; 2) an insertion of four words at the end of verse 1 (coming from Isa. 58:6); and 3) the omission of the final phrase of Isa. 61:2. Thus there are several notable differences in the quotation as it stands in Luke. A comparison of the Isa. 61:1-2 text (LXX) and the Luke 4:18-19 text (RSV) follows:[1]

Isaiah 61:1-2	Luke 4:18-19
Πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ ἐμὲ	Πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ ἐμὲ
οὗ εἵνεκεν ἔχρισέν με	οὗ εἵνεκεν ἔχρισέν με
εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς	εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς
ἀπέσταλκέν με	ἀπέσταλκέν με
ἰάσασθαι τοὺς συντετριμμένους τῇ καρδίᾳ	
κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν	κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν
καὶ τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν	καὶ τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν
	ἀποστεῖλαι τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει
καλέσαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτὸν	κηρύξαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτὸν
καὶ ἡμέραν ἀνταποδόσεως	

The following differences can be seen. The phrase which is inserted by Luke (coming from Isa. 58:6[2]) has ἀποστεῖλαι for the LXX reading of ἀπόστελλε. The final phrase which is quoted by Luke changes the LXX reading of καλέσαι to κηρύξαι.[3] The change in words can show more urgency and intensity in the act of proclaiming.

Tannehill compares the Lukan text with the Hebrew MT and notes that it follows the LXX over against the Hebrew at three points: 1. Adonai Yahweh is translated by a simple κύριος; 2) the second Yahweh is omitted;

---

[1] LXX text from Septuaginta, E. Rahlfs, ed., (Stuttgart: Württemburgische, 1959); Luke text from The Greek New Testament, 3rd ed., Aland, etc.

[2] ἀπόστελλε τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει

[3] καλέσαι is from καλέω, "to call"; κηρύξαι is from κηρύσσω, "to announce, or to proclaim as a herald". LSJ, pp. 866 and 949.

and 3) "blind" is substituted for "imprisoned", giving a different meaning to v^{e}la'asurim p^{e}qah-qoah. Thus he concludes that the origin of the quotation came from within the Greek-speaking church.[1]

Sparks sees this quotation as an excellent example of Luke's use of the LXX. He believes that Luke relied heavily on the LXX, giving five reasons for his belief:[2]

1. The Old Testament quotations in Luke show heavy reliance on the LXX.
2. The forms of the Old Testament names used by Luke are almost always identical with the form occurring in the LXX.
3. The characteristic vocabulary of Luke's most striking phrases has an exact (or very nearly exact) parallel in the LXX.
4. A high percentage of Luke's vocabulary is drawn from the LXX.
5. Several times Luke has taken Mark and has rephrased him in accord with the terminology of the LXX.

The question of whether Jesus read from the LXX at all is raised by Violet, who feels certain that Jesus would have used the Hebrew text of Isaiah. The Aramaic context which surrounds the LXX quotation indicates that Luke is responsible for the Greek translation, which he then inserted into a basically Aramaic story.[3]

Cave sees several possibilities for explaining how Luke came to record the Isaiah text as he did:

1) Luke may have quoted the text from memory and simply misquoted

---

[1] Tannehill, p. 65n; also Schürmann, Das Lukasevangelium, Erster Teil, Herder's Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament, (Freiburg: Herder, 1969), p. 231; M. Rese, Alttestamentliche Motiv in der Christologie des Lukas, (Mohn: Gütersloh, 1969), p. 214 sees four changes: 1) the omission of "to heal the brokenhearted", v. 18; 2) the substitution of κηρύξαι in v. 19 for the original καλέσαι ; 3) the insertion of "to bring release to the oppressed", v. 18; 4) the elimination of "and the day of recompense", v. 19.

[2] Sparks, pp. 133-137.

[3] Violet, p. 258.

[4] C.H. Cave, "The Sermon at Nazareth ... In Light of the Synagogue Lectionary", TU 88 (1964), p. 232.

by making the additions and the omissions.[1]

2. Jesus, in reading the scriptures, skipped from Isa. 61:1 to 58:6 and then forward again to 61:2.[2]

3. The two texts had been associated together within the early church tradition, so that Luke quoted them as they were being circulated within that tradition rather than directly from the LXX.[3]

A fourth possibility is added by Rese. He says that Luke deliberately altered the quotation to serve his own theological purposes. He decided to insert the phrase from Isa. 58:6 and to eliminate 61:2b. This means that the present text, as well as its application must be seen as the work of Luke.[4]

A very similar claim is made by Franklin. He says that Luke uses scripture to conform to the image of Jesus which his gospel presents. His use of the Old Testament is very much affected by his theology of history. He does not consider the original form of the quotation to be sacrosanct, but adapts it to become a more adequate vehicle in explaining the person of Jesus.[5]

Tannehill speculates that the alterations in the Isaiah quotation may be due to the fact that Luke was quoting from an older and slightly different version of the LXX. But almost immediately, he rejects this

---

[1] This position is also taken by Plummer, p. 121; and by Anderson, "Horizons", p. 269 who says that the insertion was intended as a substitute for the final phrase; by Jeremias, Jesus' Promise to the Nations (London: SCM, 1958), p. 46 who sees the influence of Isa. 29:18 and 35:5 in the text.

[2] Cave himself rejects this. The Mishnah Megillah 24a does not permit skipping backwards in this manner.

[3] Also Leaney, p. 53, who says that this tradition may be either oral or in document form. Haenchen, p. 64 says that the only historical knowledge needed is that Isa. 61:1 was applied to Jesus in early tradition.

[4] Rese, p. 153.

[5] E. Franklin, Christ the Lord (London: SPCK, 1975), pp. 74-75.

and concludes that this wording could only have come from the LXX as it is presently known. This must be seen as the result of Luke's own hand in composition. It could not be a literal reporting of what Jesus said.[1]

The possibility that Luke was relying on a primitive book of Testimonies is raised by Hatch. But the evidence supporting such a proposal is very slim. It shows that Isa. 58:6 and 61:1-2 are never combined as one text in places where quotations from Isaiah are used. But there is evidence which shows that other texts were frequently combined. Composite quotes are relatively common in the New Testament, as well as in other literature, so that Luke's handling of the Isaiah text is not exceptional.[2]

The interruptions of the text are used by Grundmann as proof that Luke saw the Messiah as one who brings salvation and not as the one who brings the Spirit.[3] But Rese takes a very different view. He says that salvation is not given as the assignment of Jesus because Luke understood the Spirit as being a prophetic Spirit. To this Spirit, which Jesus claimed was upon him, belongs proclamation and forgiveness, but not salvation. He goes on to conclude that the Isaiah quotation does not encompass the total ministry of Jesus, but picks up only a partial aspect of it. It does not even adequately describe all the prophetic elements. However, he grants that on the basis of the structure of the gospel and the

---

[1] Tannehill, p. 66; see also Anderson, "Horizons", p. 269 who says that whether or not Jesus spoke these literal words is beyond proof. But we may detect in both shape and form, Luke's own theological point of view. For an opposing view, see I.H. Marshall, Luke, Historian and Theologian (Exeter: Paternoster, 1970), p. 122 who sees this as coming from Jesus.

[2] E. Hatch, Essays in Biblical Greek (Oxford: Clarendon, 1889), p. 203; and J. Fitzmyer, "4Q Testimonia and the New Testament", Theological Studies 18 (Dec. 1957), pp. 513-537. He cites the appearance of the two texts in the following locations:
61:1-2 = Barnabas xiv.9; Irenaeus, Ad. Haer.iii.9.3; iii.17.1; 18.3.
58:6 = Clement, Paed. iii.12.90.1; Strom. ii.18.79.1; Justin, I Apol. xxxvii 8; Irenaeus, Ad. Haer. iv.17.3; Cyprian, Testimonia iii.1.

[3] Grundmann, p. 121.

the position of this pericope within that structure, this partial aspect does receive essential importance.[1]

The final phrase καὶ ἡμέραν ἀνταποδόσεως is omitted from the quotation as Luke records it. There is no evidence that Jesus included the phrase only to have Luke delete it for his own theological reasons. If the final verse or phrase of a synagogue Haphtarah reading was felt to be inappropriate for the occasion, skipping over it and going on to a more suitable final verse was permitted.[2] Yoder notes, but rejects, the possibility of the Talmudic practice of beginning a quotation and then expecting the congregation to complete it from their own memory.[3]

A more commonly accepted solution is that the omission reflects the theology of Jesus regarding the inclusion of the Gentiles into the new Kingdom of God, a point which is also emphasized in Luke's own theology.[4]

Rese supports this claim by showing that the theme of judgment upon the Gentiles is consistently lacking in Luke's account of events which are also recorded in the other gospels. But the evidence which he presents is not adequate to prove what might otherwise be a very valid point.[5]

---

[1]Rese, p. 152.

[2]Guilding, p. 28. See the Mishnah Megillah 24a for this ruling.

[3]Yoder, Politics, p. 36. Jeremias says that this is why the crowd was so angry. They knew what was omitted and did not like it. Jesus Promise to the Nations, (London: SCM, 1958), p. 46.

[4]Marshall, Historian, p. 121. See also Jeremias, New Testament Theology (London: SCM, 1971), p. 207; J. Schniewind, Das Evangelium Matthäus, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962), p. 140. He says that the text emphasizes the superiority of good tidings, so that the phrase of condemnation would not be fitting. Rese, p. 145 agrees.

[5]Rese, p. 153. Luke does tone down 6:37 (par. Matt. 7:2), also 10:12 (par. Matt. 10:15). Jeremias agrees with this basic claim, noting that Jesus consistently rejected the thought that God would visit special vengeance upon the Gentiles. Theology, p. 146.

Jeremias sees the omission of vengeance as being the basis for the violent reaction of the worshippers. He expands the original quotation of Jesus to include a free rendering of the prophetic promise in Isa. 29:18 and also Isa. 35:5. Both of these texts, along with 61:1-2 include the idea of vengeance. Isa. 29:20 says: "for the ruthless shall come to naught and the scoffer cease, and all who watch to do evil shall be cut off." Isa. 35:4 has the phrase: "Behold, your God will come with vengeance." And Isa. 61:2 ends with: "And the day of vengeance of our God." Thus it is deliberate that this note of vengeance is missing from the words of Jesus. Jeremias explains it by saying:

> "Happy is the man who is not offended because the Messianic age wears a different aspect than expected, and instead of God's vengeance, it proclaims tender mercy for the poor."[1]

It is the assumption of Jeremias that the worshippers noted the omission of vengeance from these texts whenever Jesus had used them, thus when he did it here as well, they got the message which Jesus was intending to give. Their decision was to reject the message and him with it.

A word of caution is urged by Lindars. He sees Jesus using the scriptures when the need arose, but normally he preferred to teach from living situations without appealing to the written word. This led to the impression of authority in contrast to the scribes. Luke may have misunderstood Mark's description of Jesus at Nazareth, for this use of the scriptures for the accompanying self-declaration is not typical of Jesus.[2]

This Isaiah quotation is reflective of the themes which Jesus often used in his synagogue preaching. Isa. 61:1 and 58:6 both deal with identical thematic material. (The last phrase of 58:5 "and a day acceptable to the Lord" is quite similar to Isa. 61:2 "the year of the Lord's favour".)

---

[1] Jeremias, Promise, p. 46.

[2] B. Lindars, New Testament Apologetic, (London: SCM, 1973), p. 30.

Lk 4:15 reports that before coming to Nazareth, Jesus had done a substantial amount of synagogue preaching, and it is likely that both Isa. 58:5-9 and 61:1-2 were frequently used as texts for that preaching. Therefore, each of these texts would have a direct association with the basic message of Jesus. In writing this account of the Nazareth incident Luke quoted from the LXX from memory, and unintentionally mixed the two texts, not because Jesus had combined them in the Nazareth service itself, but because each was such a constant theme for Jesus' preaching ministry. When Luke quoted from Isa. 61:1-2, he mistakenly included Isa. 58:6 in the quotation because it had been used so often and was so commonly associated with the preaching ministry of Jesus.

The omission of the final phrase can be explained in much the same manner. Whereas Jeremias may be stretching the evidence to include Isa. 29:18 and 35:5 behind the Lukan wording of the LXX quotation of Isa. 61:1-2, he may be quite accurate in believing that when Jesus read these texts in the synagogue he omitted these special words of vengeance. In this way, as with the mixing of the quotations, Luke is accurately portraying the theological stance taken by Jesus in his ministry. The omission may have been conscious and deliberate by Luke (in order to emphasize that stance), but more likely it was unintentional, in that these texts had been quoted together so frequently that by the time Luke wrote them down, he simply misquoted by inserting the Isa. 58:6 phrase, and then stopped quoting before the final phrase, as was generally done in reporting the text upon which Jesus had based his sermon. Whether the omission was intentional or simply accidental, the end result was a generally accurate expression of the basic message which Jesus had proclaimed throughout Palestine.

2. A Lexicographical Study of the Isaiah Quotation and Application

a) Verses 18-19, The Isaiah Quotation

Words and phrases develop their own particular meaning as they are used over the years. They are affected by their historical usage as well as by the present meaning which is given to them. The elements of the message of Jesus can better be understood through a study of various words and phrases which are included in the quotation from Isaiah.

1) Πνεῦμα κυρίου "Spirit of the Lord"

Πνεῦμα goes back to the Hebrew ruach which, among other meanings, was the life-giving breath of God. The ruach was responsible for prophetic speech,[1] and in principle, (especially in classical prophecy), the ruach Yahweh was power, morally defined power. Classical prophecy took ruach from the surrounding world, lifted it out of the religious and ethical morality and understood it as the teleological will and work of personal divine power. Hence, ruach Yahweh became an expression of God's inner nature and presence.[2]

In the LXX, ruach is translated πνεῦμα in a great majority of the cases where it appears. It is principally the prophetic spirit who speaks for God. In the last times the Messiah will possess the Holy Spirit (Isa. 11:2). Ps. of Solomon 17:42 says of the Messianic king: "ὁ Θεὸς κατειργάσατο αὐτὸν δυνατὸν ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ" .[3]

The presence of the Spirit plays a dominant role in Luke's gospel.

---

[1] Gen. 41:38; II Sam. 23:2; I Kgs. 22:24; II Chr. 24:20; Ez. 11:5; Zech. 7:12; Joel 2:28.

[2] Baumgartner, "Πνεῦμα" , TDNT, v.6, p. 367.

[3] Baumgartner, p. 389. Baumgartner cites this as 17:39, but Charles, Pseudepigrapha gives it as 17:42. We are following Charles. The text is cited from Rahlfs SEPTUAGINTA.

Here at the beginning of his ministry, Jesus is presented as the unique bearer of the Spirit (cf. 4:1-2). This Spirit was not a sudden or accidental power coming upon Jesus, for the Spirit belonged to Jesus. He was in possession of the Spirit, he was not simply an object which had been taken over by the Spirit.[1] The possession of the Spirit of the Lord implies a special relationship with God. The Old Testament scriptures made this connection with the one upon whom God has placed his Spirit.[2] For Jesus, it is generally felt that this experience of anointing refers to his baptism (3:21-22).[3]

This important relationship of Jesus and the Spirit becomes very obvious by noting how, at every major step in the life of Jesus leading up to and including this inaugural sermon, the presence of the Spirit is seen:[4]

1:35 - The announcement to Mary: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you"
2:25-32 - The presentation in the temple: The Holy Spirit led Simeon there to see the baby.
3:22 - The baptism: "The Holy Spirit descended upon him . . . ."
4:1-2 - The temptations: Jesus returned "full of the Spirit" and was "led by the Spirit" into the desert.
4:14 - The ministry: "Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit"
4:18 - The Nazareth sermon: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me".

---

[1] Rese, p. 148.

[2] Isa. 42:1, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him, he will bring forth justice to the nations."

[3] Plummer, p. 121; Tannehill, p. 69; T.W. Manson, The Gospel of Luke (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1937), p. 41; W.C.Van Unnik, "Jesus the Christ", NTS 8 (1961-62), p. 113; Conzelmann, Luke, p. 180; Marshall, Historian, p. 202; Rese, p. 148 is not sure what ἔχρισεν is intended to cover. For Luke, he feels it means that Jesus is the one who is endowed with the Spirit, and is indeed the Messiah.

[4] Franklin, p. 64. But on p. 133 Franklin cautions against making Luke into a theologian of the Spirit, for his theology in this area is not fully worked out. Franklin refers to Luke's use of "it" rather than the more adequate "he" when discussing the Spirit. We were not able to substantiate Franklin's argument. We found no evidence supporting this use of "it" over against "he". Nor could we find any basis for saying that this usage indicated a developing theology of the Spirit.

The Nazareth sermon, based on the Isa. 61 quotation, simply affirms by rooting it in scriptural tradition that which Luke had been identifying at every step in the life of Jesus.[1]

To possess the Spirit of God was to be a prophet. But it should never be assumed that simply because Jesus was conscious of this prophetic anointing, he was content to take his place as just one more link in the chain of many Old Testament prophets. The anointing referred to in v. 18 had originally been thought of as a prophetic anointing.[2] Εὐαγγελίσασθαι and κηρύξαι underline this anointing and commissioning. In addition, the pesher which Jesus employs in v. 21 indicates the fulfilment of the prophecy ἐν τοῖς ὠσιν ὑμῶν.[3] But this announcement is more than simply a prophetic statement about God's chronology, for he places himself as the central element in the event. He is not just a prophet who announces an external event, although the process of announcement involves prophetic concepts. Lindars pursues this by suggesting that Jesus ceased to be the inaugurator of the Kingdom, in which the wonders of the time of the Messiah will come to pass. Instead, he becomes the actual agent of the wonders, so that they occur through him.[4]

Luke presents Jesus as the one anointed with the Spirit (therefore the Messiah) and commissioned by God to announce and establish the time of God's favour through preaching good news to the poor and proclaiming

---

[1] Tannehill, p. 69

[2] Van Unnik, p. 114 "prophets are those people who are anointed by the Spirit", quoting the Damascus document II, 12; See also Anderson, Jesus and Christian Origins (New York, Oxford Univ. Press, 1964), p. 256 for the same quotation. F. Hahn, The Titles of Jesus in Preaching (London: lutterworth, 1969), p. 381 says that the use of ἔχρισεν shows that an anointing in the strict sense is being thought of, and that this is an appointment to the prophetic office. But some see it as more than that, referring to I Sam. 16:13; Ps.Sol. 17:32; Isa. 11:2 where a link is established between anointing, the presence of the Spirit, and either kingly or Messianic functions.

[3] Schürmann, "Zur Traditionsgeschichte", p. 191

[4] Lindars, p. 248; see also Stonehouse, p. 87.

the time of release, which includes Jesus' ministry of healing and of declaring the forgiveness of God.[1] Some of the problem of misunderstanding is that this prophetic-messianic declaration is not at all what Jewish expectations would have connected with messianic redemption. It was the most un-Jewish discourse for a Jewish messiah to use in the opening of his ministry.[2]

It was the conviction of the Jewish synagogue leadership that the Spirit had been quenched. They believed that the time was alienated from God and that they were under judgment.[3] The announcement by Jesus that the Holy Spirit was upon him should have been received with rejoicing and celebration, for among other things, it would have implied the return of the Spirit to Israel. Luke was able to see the interrelationship of a) Isa. 61:1 and its declaration of the Spirit, with b) the claims of Jesus that this passage was fulfilled in himself, and c) the beginning of a new day in world events because God had intervened in a new way.[4]

2) Εὐαγγελίσασθαι "preach good news"

One of the primary tasks of a person who is anointed by the Spirit is to preach good news to the poor. Εὐαγγελίζομαι is the verb used in the LXX to translate bassar, meaning to preach good news in a general sense.[5] The origin, and to some extent its meaning, is disputed. Marshall refers to Stuhlmacher's study which suggests that "good" is not as closely connected to the root as had generally been thought. But Marshall concludes that the Greek etymology and the Isaiah source both indicate good news.[6]

---

[1] Tannehill, p. 72.

[2] Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus, the Messiah. (London: Longman, 1897), p. 454.

[3] Jeremias, Theology, pp. 78-81.

[4] de Jonge, "11Q Melchizedek", p. 310

[5] Friedrich, "Εὐαγγελίζομαι". TDNT, 2, p. 707

[6] Marshall, Historian, p. 124.

By the time of Deutero-Isaiah, bassar had developed a rather technical religious usage. The word made a very close association of the one bearing the message with the message itself, making the message and the bearer of the message virtually one and the same. It also picked up a definite meaning of the new age where bassar is promised for all nations, because Yahweh, God of Israel, is God of the gentiles as well.[1] This concept of mibbᵉssar was still very much alive in the time of Jesus. The one who brings good tidings will come and with him will dawn the messianic age. The name of this person became confused throughout the years, so that some began to believe that the mibbᵉssar would be the Messiah himself. This meant that all who hear and receive his message will become mibbᵉssarim. The Deutero-Isaiah concepts of eschatology remained as part of the meaning of bassar, for the mibbᵉssar does not declare that the rule of God will soon be coming---he proclaims it, and it happens even as it is being proclaimed.[2]

The connection then of Jesus himself with the good news which he proclaimed has a strong Old Testament base, giving added support to the belief that his message was a renewed proclamation of the arrival of the new age promised in Deutero-Isaiah. It played an essential role in the primitive Christian understanding of Jesus as the eschatological Prophet.[3]

The LXX uses εὐαγγελίζομαι in several different ways. It reflects

---

[1] Friedrich, "Εὐαγγελιζομαι" p. 707; see also M. Hooker, Jesus and the Servant, (London: SPCK, 1959), p. 67; also Hahn, p. 38.

[2] Friedrich, "Εὐαγγελίζομαι" pp. 708-716; D. Hill, "Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth", VT 13 (1971), p. 178 says that Luke may have applied this to Jesus. 11Q Melchizedek, line 18, says that the bringer of good tidings (mᵉbasser) of Isa. 52:7 is anointed by the Spirit (massah ha-ruah).

[3] Marshall, Historian, p. 124; so also Hooker, p. 67; Hahn, p. 38.

the influence of the Hebrew understanding of good news, but often refers to good news in the profane sense of being any good news, as well as in the more specific sense of being the good news of Yahweh's salvation.[1]

In the New Testament εὐαγγελίζομαι is not just the proclamation by Jesus, it is the proclamation of Jesus, both his words and his deeds.[2] Luke chooses εὐαγγελίζομαι for his editorial summaries of the activity of Jesus.[3] His preference for the word can be seen in that Mark does not use it at all, and Matthew uses it only once (11:15 which parallels Lk 7:22). Luke, however, uses it ten times in the gospel and fifteen times in Acts.[4] Rese recognizes this, but believes that Luke's intention needs to be seen in the context of understanding that Luke does not normally use verbs in the "terminus technicus" sense. Thus εὐαγγελίζομαι does not mean the proclamation of Jesus alone, but has a very common overall meaning of the proclamation of good news.[5] Εὐαγγελίζω is not something which Jesus alone does. In the gospel, John the Baptist does it (3:18) and the disciples do it (9:6). However, their proclamation is clearly a proclamation of the Jesus event, so that Luke's use of the word carries a basic consistency. This is also the view taken by Marshall as he says that once the basic meaning of the word was determined in the first proclamation at Nazareth, it remained constant for Luke, and that it applies to wherever the Kingdom of God is the content of what is being preached.[6]

---

[1] Hooker, p. 66. References for the profane sense of any good news are: I Sam. 31:9; II Sam. 1:20; 4:10; 19:19,20,26,31; I Kgs. 1:42; I Chr. 10:9; Ps. 67:11; Jer. 20:15. References for a special use of good news for salvation are: Ps. 39:9; 95:2; Nah. 1:15; Isa. 40:9; 52:7; 60:6; 61:1.

[2] Friedrich, Εὐαγγελίζομαι p. 720; see also de Jonge, p. 309.

[3] Lk 4:43; 7:22; 8:1; 9:6; 20:1.

[4] Lk 1:19; 2:10; 3:18; 4:18; 4:43; 7:22; 8:1; 9:6; 16:15; 20:1. Acts 5:42; 8:4,12,25,35,40; 10:36; 11:20; 13:32; 14:7,15,21; 15:35; 16:10; 17:18. Smith, p. 156.

[5] Rese, p. 149; also LSJ, p. 594.

[6] Marshall, Historian, p. 124.

Luke's use of this word has particular importance for our study. Immediately following the rejection at Nazareth, Jesus went to Capernaum. After a successful ministry there, he again moved on, with the explanation: "I must preach the good news (εὐαγγελίσασθαι) of the Kingdom of God to the other cities also; for I was sent (ἀπεστάλην) for this purpose." (4:43). The obvious intention of Luke is to say that the good news which is to be preached in the other cities is exactly the same as the good news which had just been proclaimed in Capernaum, and before that in Nazareth (see εὐαγγελίσασθαι in 4:18).

This direct connection of the good news in Capernaum with the good news in Nazareth is further supported by the Lukan use of ἀπεστάλην in 4:43. This verb appears twice in the Nazareth version of the Isaianic text (ἀπέσταλκέν-ἀπέσταλκέ of Isa. 61:1, and ἀποστεῖλαι - ἀποστέλλε of Isa. 58:6).[1] Luke's use of ἀπεστάλην in 4:43 shows direct dependency upon the theology and text of Isa. 61:1, and affirms his understanding of the jubilary content to the good news preached by Jesus in the other cities. Jesus was sent (ἀπεστάλκεν) to preach good news (εὐαγγελίσασθαι) to the poor. This is clearly established at Nazareth.[2] Thus when Luke uses this

---

[1] It should be noted that in the LXX (61:1) ἀπέσταλκέ is used with εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς , while in the UBS edition of Lk 4:18, editorial punctuation alters the LXX reading, in that ἔχρισέν με is linked with εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς , and ἀπέσταλκέν με is made part of the phrase ἀπέσταλκέν με κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν . It is our judgment that this alteration is incorrect, and that the LXX reading is the proper one. Punctuation is editorial, but the sense of the text indicates that it should read: Πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ' ἐμέ οὗ εἵνεκεν ἔχρισέν με, εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς ἀπέσταλκέν με, κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν . . . . . This is a more accurate rendering of the LXX intention, and it also provides a theological and linguistic unity, linking the four parallel infinitives of εὐαγγελίσασθαι ; κηρύξαι; ἀποστεῖλαι; κηρύξαι) with the ἀπέσταλκέ commission. This also properly identifies the anointing (ἔχρισεν) with the Spirit of the Lord rather than with the preaching (with agent rather than with function). The Spirit of the Lord is upon the messenger as he performs his task, which is elaborated by the fourfold commission which follows. The textual insertion and deletion has been noted above. These changes do not in any way affect the argument presented here.

[2] Dunn, Unity and Diversity in the New Testament, (London: SCM, 1977), p. 189 does not speak of the jubilee, but he says that Jesus' understanding of his mission as proclamation of good news was drawn in large part from the Isa. 61:1-2 prophecy.

same word in other settings, one accepts this 4:18 (supported by 4:43) meaning for εὐαγγελίζομαι with its full jubilary impact.

3) πτωχοῖς "to the poor"

The poor are particularly singled out as the group to whom the good news is to be preached. Exactly who these poor are is a matter of some disagreement. Jeremias contrasts Luke's concept of the poor with that of Matthew, and sees a difference in meaning. Matthew's poor have a purely religious form. They are those who are humble, who are poor before God and are conscious of their spiritual poverty. Luke, on the other hand, means those who are literally poor, who suffer poverty, hunger and persecution because of their discipleship. The reason for the difference is that Luke's sources came from a church caught in deep distress, needing comfort and reassurance.[1]

The Hebrew word for poor is ʿani. It describes the relationship of receiving or depending more than an actual state of social or economic distress. Only later, in more developed usage does ʿani denote a state of lowliness or distress where one is reduced in competence or has lesser worth as a person. ʿAni came to mean those who are wrongfully impoverished or dispossessed. The term is not used for "deserved poverty". This explains why Yahweh is seen as the protector of the ʿanawim. This then led to the acceptance of religious meaning for ʿani as one who draws near to God, one who is pious and humble.[2] Marshall adds that the poor were forced to depend on God since they had no human help; thus the word combines a sense of weakness with dependence upon Yahweh.[3]

---

[1] Jeremias, Theology, p. 112.

[2] Bammel, πτωχός , TDNT, v.6, pp. 886-888.

[3] Marshall, Historian, p. 123.

This evaluation of the poor and the religious significance of their condition is a contested point. Batey contends that the Hebrew words for "rich" and "poor" had no positive or negative moral meanings in and of themselves, but that these inferences developed out of the cultural milieu, so that contrasting meanings were applied to the words. He uses the Psalms to illustrate these two contrasting points of view. One line of thought stressed the oppression of the poor and how God gave them special protection and deliverance. The opposing view grew out of the doctrine of retribution, which saw one's economic status as an index of personal virtue and of God's approval.[1]

Percy does not see it that way. For him, "poor" in both the Psalms and in later Jewish literature always means a very real, legitimate case of need and should never be identified directly with the concept of pious or righteous.[2]

During the Intertestamental period, the hope of the poor centered in the coming age, for there poverty will vanish. Bammel cites the Book of Jubilees 23:19 and Syriac Baruch 70:4 in support of this claim.[3]

Rabbinic literature preserves the tradition that there will be no poor in the new age. However, Ps. of Solomon stresses more of an inner quality than an actual change in the economic condition.[4]

---

[1] R. Batey, Jesus and the Poor, (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 92. References saying that God protects the poor are: Ps. 9:18; 10:1-18; 12:5; 13:6; 34:6; 35:10; 37:14-15; 40:17; 41:1-3; 68:10; 70:5; 72:1-14; 74:19-21; 82:4; 86:1-2; 107:41; 109:16-31; 113:7; 132:15; 140:12. References on retribution are: Ps. 1:1-6; 112:1-10; Prov. 6:6-11; 10:4-5; 21:17,20; 23:21.

[2] E. Percy, Die Botschaft Jesu (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1953), pp. 82-89.

[3] Bammel, p. 896. Jub. 23:19 gives a neutral picture where the poor and the beggars will fight against the princes and the rich. Baruch 70:4 shows an age of confusion where the poor will be set above the rich.

[4] Ps. Sol. 5:2,11; 10:6; 15:1; 18:2. Bammel, p. 895. See also Batey pp. 94-97 for Rabbinic teachings regarding the poor.

In Palestinian Judaism, the plight of the poor did not improve. The reasons for their condition are given by Bammel:[1]

1) The social structure of the day was trying to recover from the severe distress of war. This led to the creation of a kind of poverty ethos. Interest in the masses of common people declined, so that a new surge of Jewish sects began to spring up. The Karaites were an example of such groups, where the poor were glorified by giving special emphasis to verses like Zeph. 3:12; Isa. 29:19; 32:7; Zech. 11:11.[2]

2) The poor law of the day was interpreted so that the poor did not really benefit. Even though they received help, the poor still had to pay certain temple taxes and prescribed offerings. Thus, what was intended to help the poor, merely passed through their hands, giving support instead to certain religious groups.

3) Voluntary philanthropy, while intending to help the poor, did at times add to the difficulty of the situation, for the poor began to throng to Jerusalem as the religious center, so that they could be closer to the source of help.

4) The Rabbinic attitude of the times came down very hard on the poor. Following the exile, negative feelings about the poor were very strong. The modest sacrifices brought by the poor were scorned by the priests (Lk 21:1-4). Poverty was considered to be a curse of God due to sin; thus some Rabbis taught that the rich were excused from helping the poor because their poverty was an action of God upon them. The poor were told that heavenly judgment would not recognize the excuse that they had to work for food and could not afford the time needed to study the law

---

[1] Bammel, pp. 899-902. Batey has a discussion of many of these same factors, but his arrangment follows a different pattern.

[2] G. Vermes, Jesus, the Jew, (London: Collins, 1973), p. 77. He says that "community of the poor" became a favourite term for the Qumran group. The poor were seen as objects of God's dealings. There was a strong theme of Hasidic piety which involved total detachment from possessions. "What is mine is yours, what is yours is your own" demonstrated this attitude.

every day. Only a few moderates saw the poor as objects of divine mercy.[1]

The plight of the poor was made even worse by the connection between poverty and sickness. People did not have money to buy proper food; thus their diets were so bad that they became ill and could not work. When they could not work they lost their jobs and were pushed even further into the misery of poverty. Their only recourse was to beg. The situation was further compounded by the presence of many bad physicians who could not heal, but charged their high fees anyway.[2]

It is this kind of person, caught in this type of situation, whom Luke has in mind as he talks about the πτωχοί in his gospel. It appears ten times and means one who crouches or cringes, thus its application to beggars. It is someone who because of total destitution is forced to seek the help of others by begging if he is to remain alive.[3]

During the time of Jesus there were in the Jewish nation circles of anawim who lived apart from Pharisaism and Zealotism, who were called the "quiet in the land", humbly keeping the law and waiting for the fulfilment of their eschatological hopes. It has been speculated that Jesus came from one of these groups of messianic pietists.[4]

The presence of the poor was a major factor in the society into which Jesus came preaching the good news of the Kingdom of God. Wink credits John the Baptist with initiating this ministry to the poor, saying that the Evangelists read this as an eschatological sign in relation to Jesus.[5]

---

[1] Batey, p. 10. Jesus firmly rejected this attitude of the Rabbis.

[2] Batey, pp. 9-10. See Lk 8:43-48 and Mk 5:25-34.

[3] LSJ, p. 1550

[4] G. Bornkamm, Jesus of Nazareth, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1960), p. 203.

[5] W. Wink, John the Baptist in Gospel Tradition, (Cambridge: Univ. Press, 1968), p. 20n.

This good news to the poor was a slap in the face of the religious attitudes of the day. The idea that God wanted dealings with the poor and with sinners, as well as the accompanying claim that they were nearer to God than the "righteous", provoked a passionate protest from the Pharisees. They taught that it was a religious duty to avoid sinners, who could be saved only by altering their way of life and making good. When Jesus called these people and not the righteous, it seemed to the Pharisees to be an apparent dissolution of ethics, as though moral conduct had no meaning to God. The world around Jesus based man's relationship to God on ethical behaviour. When the gospel which Jesus preached did not follow this pattern, it literally shook the theological foundations of the Jewish faith. The message that God wants to deal with sinners and that His love extends to them was without parallel at that time.[1]

Luke's gospel highlights this special interest of God in the poor. On a few occasions, Luke appears to accept the wealthy (8:2-3; 19:1f), but there are many more passages where a patent rejection of the rich is a dominant theme.[2] Luke never quite integrates these two themes, and in material which he himself writes, he leans toward the rejection emphasis. But his renunciation of wealth is not seen as a way to benefit the poor. It is presented as the only way to provide salvation for the one who owns the wealth.[3]

Marshall sees this leading to a reversal of positions between the rich and the poor in the kingdom of God. He identifies this theme in Lk 6:20-26, then sees it reaffirmed in 12:33-34; 14:7-11; 16:25. He says that this role reversal is not confined to wealth and poverty alone,

---

[1] Jeremias, Theology, pp. 118-119.

[2] Lk 6:24-25; 12:15-33; 14:33; 16:13; 18:25.

[3] Bammel, pp. 906-907.

for the problem is not wealth and poverty as such, it is mainly a matter of one's attitude toward wealth and poverty.[1]

Stonehouse also moves this out of the literal reversal of the stations in life. His analysis of the social situation is not one that contemplates a "new deal" which will come to the poor by means of social reform from within. The gospel points to the Holy One of Israel as being the one who alone will bring about this radical change in the fortunes of the poor. This announcement of salvation does not imply that the poor of the earth will suddenly be without want.[2]

This tension between the rich and the poor is seen by Gaston as being the center of reconciliation in Christ. To the poor the gospel is good news, but to the rich it is judgment. The gospel does not mean that the poor will overthrow the rich and seek revenge. On the contrary, the message of the gospel is reconciliation between the oppressed and their oppressors.[3]

4) ἀπεσταλκέν με "he has sent me"

carries the meaning of delegated authority, where the person who is sent is to be the envoy of the one who does the sending.[4]

---

[1]Marshall, Historian, pp. 141-143. D. Kraybill, The Upside Down Kingdom, (Scottdale: Herald Press, 1978), p. 145 insists that the change must be much more than just attitudinal. He believes that Jesus is talking about literal economic change.

[2]Stonehouse, p. 81. Jesus was the one to effect the change, but his method was to announce a new age where all God's people will share together.

[3]L. Gaston, No Stone on Another, (Leiden: Brill, 1970), p. 314. But Gaston does not give any details about what specific form this reconciliation will take. The concepts which he uses sound very jubilean, although he does not use that terminology. The approach of the jubilee year was good news to the poor and bad news for the rich because they then had to share with the poor.

[4]Plummer, p. 121.

In the LXX, the word occurs more than seven hundred times, normally being a translation of shalah, meaning to be commissioned with a message or a task. Shalah is less a statement concerning the mission than it is a statement about the one who initiates the mission and the concern which he has. The emphasis rests upon the one who sends rather than upon the one who is sent, although both are closely connected. The word is not particularly religious, but takes on religious meaning only when the situation is religiously conditioned. In Luke, ἀποστέλλω appears twenty-six times and includes both religious and general meanings.[1]

5) κηρύξαι "to proclaim"

Κηρύξαι appears thirty times in the LXX, with a wide variety of equivalent meanings.[2] It is often translated "to cry out" or "to cry aloud". Only rarely is it used to describe the proclamation of a prophet. It is not the delivery of a discourse, but the declaration of an event.[3]

The change in v. 19 to κηρύξαι (from the LXX reading of καλέσαι) is attributed to either the presence of κηρύξαι in the preceding verse, which may have influenced Luke, or it may reflect the importance of this word in the missionary language of the early church.[4] Rese sees this change as reflecting Luke's own theology of the Spirit. Καλέσαι would be used by Luke only to mark the announcement. But the announcement itself

---

[1] Rengstorf, ἀποστέλλω , TDNT v. 1, pp. 400, 403-404 says that there are only twenty-five occurrences, but our own study shows twenty-six, thus we are following our own evidence. We divide them as follows: Religious: 1:19,26; 4:18,18,43; 7:27; 9:48; 10:16; 11:49; 13:34; 24:49. General: 7:3,20; 9:2,52; 10:1,3; 14:17,32; 19:14,29,32; 20:10,20; 22:8,35. This study is confirmed by Smith, Greek-English, p. 37.

[2] Κηρύσσω appears sixty-one times in the NT, with nine being in Luke: 3:3; 4:18,19,44; 8:1,39; 9:2; 12:3; 24:47. Smith, Greek-English, p. 202.

[3] Friedrich, "κηρύσσω" TDNT v. 3, pp. 701-704.

[4] Tannehill, p. 66.

is more than just a proclamation. It is what it proclaims, namely, what the Spirit brings about when above everything else, He is seen as a prophetic Spirit. Thus it is not simply announced, it is proclaimed, and in the proclamation the event itself occurs.[1]

6) ἄφεσις "release" (forgiveness)

The word ἄφεσις appears in two different forms in the Luke 4:18-19 quotation. Ἄφεσιν comes from Isa. 61:1, and ἀφέσει from Isa. 58:6. The root word is ἀφίημι meaning "to let go, to set free".[2] Bultmann claims that it often carried the legal sense of release from debt or servitude, and was never used religiously. He says that it comes from the LXX translation of yobel (Lev. 25 and 27) and of shemittah (Isa. 61:1), both of which have the implication of eschatological liberation.[3]

Ἄφεσις occurs approximately fifty times in the LXX. Twenty-seven of these are found in the basic jubilee texts of Lev. 25 and 27, plus Deut. 15:1-9. Only once (Lev. 16:26) does it appear having the meaning of forgiveness. Thus Vorländer says that ἄφεσις and ἀφίημι are not words used in the LXX to convey the concept of forgiveness.[4]

Yoder would agree as he says that the word ἄφεσις is used regularly in the LXX for the event of Jubilee.[5] Trocme ties shemittah with dᵉrōr, saying that the two correspond exactly in referring to the periodic liberation of slaves as prescribed by Moses. When it is brought over into

---

[1] Rese, p. 145.

[2] LSJ, p. 261.

[3] Bultmann, ἀφίημι TDNT v.1, p. 510.

[4] H. Vorländer, "Forgiveness" NIDNTT v.1 (Exeter: Paternoster, 1975), p. 698. Colin Brown, ed.

[5] Yoder, p. 66. See Lev. 25:28,54; Deut. 15:1ff; Isa. 61:1; Jer. 35:8.

the New Testament, the jubilean significance of ἄφεσις in Matthew, Mark and Luke is "beyond doubt" according to Trocmé.[1]

Gaston believes that ἄφεσις (which he translates "liberation" or "freedom") belongs with the touchy political situation of Jesus' time, and sees it as a fulfilment of Lk 1:51-54.[2] But others prefer to stress the spiritual rather than the literal implications of the term. Temple sees the appropriateness of the jubilee year terminology for the ministry of Jesus in that sin (both actual and original) is spiritual slavery.[3] Marshall also connects this with sin by interpreting exorcism as an attack by Jesus upon the captives of Satan and the powers of evil. People are forgiven, thus set free from the power of sin.[4]

Sloan says that dᵉror (which the LXX translates ἄφεσις) seems to have been the terminus technicus used by the prophets to indicate the year of jubilee, and that ἄφεσις also translates the complex of sabbath year passages in the Old Testament, so that "liberation" or "release" is the primary meaning of the word in the Old Testament. But when he comes to the New Testament, Sloan says that ἄφεσις almost always has the meaning of "forgiveness". Even in texts where the primary Old Testament meaning of "release" must be retained, Sloan says that this also includes the concept of forgiveness.[5]

The appearance of ἄφεσις in several critical Lukan texts suggests that the word had special importance for Luke. It appears twice in this programmatic text of 4:16-30 (ἄφεσιν - Isa. 61:1 and ἀφέσει - Isa. 58:6);

---

[1] Trocme, p. 31.

[2] Gaston, p. 312.

[3] P. Temple, "The Rejection at Nazareth", CBQ 17 (1955), p. 241.

[4] Marshall, Historian, p. 137.

[5] R. Sloan, The Favorable Year of the Lord, (Austin: Schola Press, 1977), pp. 37-38.

it is used in the summary commissioning text of Lk 24:47 (ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν); and also in the Petrine statement at Pentecost in Acts 2:38 (ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν). Ἄφεσις is not a common New Testament word, appearing only seventeen times. Of these, ten are in Luke-Acts, with one in Matthew and only two in Mark.[1] This indicates that Luke saw in this word particular value for describing the ministry of Jesus. One cannot make an absolute distinction between "forgiveness" and "release" in the meaning of ἄφεσις, but the Jewish image of the sinner being "in debt" to God brings these two meanings very closely together, so that to forgive is to release.[2]

7) ἁἰχμαλώτοις "to the captives"

In the Old Testament, αἰχμαλώτος refers to a wretched person who stands in special need of God's help. The disaster of the exile made αἰχμαλώτος Σίων (Isa. 52:2) take on deep spiritual meaning.[3] The word is frequently used in classical Greek, but appears very infrequently in the New Testament.[4] Strictly speaking, it means "prisoner of war" leading Plummer to say that the metaphor does not fit very well with the jubilee concept.[5] Stonehouse applies this to the future, saying that the captivity and bondage of Israel as God's people, and their deliverance from their oppressors by the Mighty One of Jacob, constitutes one of the

---

[1] The Luke-Acts appearances are: Lk 1:77; 3:3; 4:18,18; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18. Smith, Greek-English, p. 58

[2] The close parallel of meaning can be seen in Acts 8. Simon offered money in order to receive the Holy Spirit. Peter told him that he had placed himself in need of ἀφεθήσεται . The explanation given by Peter saying why forgiveness/release is needed is given in 8:23: "you are . . . σύνδεσμον ἀδικίας " (cf. σύνδεσμον ἀδικίας - Isa. 58:6 which is linked with Isa. 61:1-2 in the Lk 4:18-19 text. We have already shown that Isa. 58:6 contains jubilary thematic material. Thus Luke links the concept of forgiveness intimately with the jubilee textual material.)

[3] Kittel, αἰχμαλώτος , TDNT v.1, p. 195.

[4] αἰχμαλώτος occurs only here. Other forms of the noun (αἰχμαλωσία) and the verb forms (αἰχμαλωτίζω, αἰχμαλωτεύω) appear 8 times. Smith, p. 8.

[5] Plummer, p. 121.

most significant aspects of prophetic doctrine in the coming salvation.[1] Grundmann wonders if Luke might not be referring to those who are possessed (Lk 11:19), or perhaps to those who are prisoners of their sins.[2] But these attempts to move away from the more literal meaning are countered by Fischer who says that Isaiah is speaking "not of true prisoners but of those shackled by pauperizing economic and social conditions"[3] and by Miller who says "it is not the freeing of exiles but the release of those in prison and slavery for debts. . . ."[4]

8) τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν "recovery of sight to the blind"

Τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν follows the LXX wording, whereas the Masoretic Text gives la'asurim pekah-qoah, which is normally translated "the opening of the prison to those who are bound". Pekah is regularly used of opening eyes, and never of opening doors, so that the LXX may well reflect more accurately the basic meaning and intention of the Hebrew writer.[5] S. Paul connects this with Isa. 42:7 and says that in both cases "to open blind eyes" is a metaphor for releasing of prisoners. He cites cuneiform inscriptions where Sargon used the same phrase in exactly the same manner: "I destroyed their prisons and let them see the light" which means very simply, "I set them free". This equation in Hebrew of "opening one's eyes" with "freedom and liberation" is the basis for the wording found in Isa. 61:1-2, (and 42:7).[6]

---

[1] Stonehouse, p. 81.

[2] Grundmann, p. 120.

[3] Fischer, p. 179.

[4] P. Miller, "Luke 4:16-21" Interpretation 29, No. 4 (Oct. 1975), p. 418.

[5] R.T. France, p. 252. In Isaiah 42:20 it very clearly has reference to the human body, but it is opening of ears.

[6] S. Paul, "Deutero Isaiah and Cuneiform Royal Inscriptions", Essays in Memory of E.A. Speiser, W.W. Hallo, ed. (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1968), p. 182.

Brown, Driver, Briggs gives "figuratively, as freeing from a dark prison" for p^{e}kah-qoah.[1] Delitzsch looks at the dilemma between doors and eyes, then decides that "opening the eyes" is the proper meaning of the phrase.[2] France chooses to give this quotation a spiritual interpretation, saying that a literal application would be quite inappropriate since Jesus had neither healed any blind persons, nor freed any prisoners up to this point in Luke's gospel.[3] Manson goes even further, saying that all these terms (poor, captive, blind, oppressed) indicate not primarily the downtrodden victims of material pressures, but rather the victims of inward repressions, neuroses, and other spiritual ills due to basic misdirection and failure of life's energies and purposes.[4] Stonehouse takes the concept of spiritual blindness a slightly different direction. He claims that there can be little doubt that Isaiah has the divine action of removing spiritual blindness in mind. But this blindness is specifically ascribed to Israel as a nation (Isa. 42:19-20 and 59:9-14).[5]

9) ἀποστεῖλαι τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει "set at liberty the oppressed"

This phrase is an insertion from Isa. 58:6.[6] In Deut. 28:33, this is established as the antithesis of judgment and salvation as it connects being oppressed with the consequences of disobedience.[7] Temple sees this

---

[1] BDB, p. 825.

[2] Delitzsch, p. 397.

[3] France, p. 253.

[4] W. Manson, The Gospel of Luke (London: Hodder and Stoughton), 1937, p. 42. We must reject Manson's view. It incorrectly reads a 20th century psychological interpretation back into a first century setting.

[5] Stonehouse, p. 83.

[6] See pp. 160ff for a discussion of the presence of this phrase in the Lk 4:18-19 quotation.

[7] Stonehouse, p. 84.

wording as being reminiscent of the legal proclamation of jubilee in Lev. 25:10, Jer. 34:8 and Ez. 46:17. He also connects this with the reference to sight for the blind. The captives will get to use their eyes in the blessed light that has been denied them in their dark dungeons of captivity.[1]

A figurative meaning is seen by Rese, based on the ἐν ἀφέσει that follows. Whether the oppressed are the sick and the weak, or whether it is used in a negative sense cannot be determined, but Rese does rule out "liberation", choosing instead the meaning of "forgiveness". This permits him to interpret the oppressed as sinners whom Jesus freed with the gift of forgiveness. He sees Luke deliberately inserting the phrase into the text in order to include this meaning.[2] Plummer is another who chooses to spiritualize the word by interpreting these persons as being shattered and broken in spirit without making any comment on how they came to be this way.[3]

10) ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν "acceptable year of the Lord"

The quotation from Isaiah ends in mid-verse, with Jesus proclaiming the "acceptable year of the Lord". This is a direct quote from the LXX which is itself a translation of the Hebrew liqrō shănaṭ layᵉhovah. Raṣōn appears fifty-nine times in the LXX under a variety of translations, but with δέκτος and θέλημα being the most common.[4] It comes from rāṣāh,

---

[1] Temple, p. 232; see also F. Godot, The Gospel of Luke, (Edinburgh: Clark, 1870), p. 235.

[2] Rese, p. 146.

[3] Plummer, p. 122.

[4] E. Hatch and H. Redpath, A Concordance to the Septuagint and Other Greek Versions of the Old Testament, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1897-1906). Raṣōn is translated with the following words: δέκτος -21; θέλημα -13; εὐδοκία -7; ἀρέστος -3; χάρις -3; εἰσδέκτος , προσδέκτος , θέλησις -2; βούλεσθαι , ἔλεος , ἐπιθυμία , θελεῖν , ἵλαρος , ἱλαρότης -1. It also appears eleven times in Sirach and Ps. Sol. Schürmann contends that in most LXX translations of raṣon, God is intended as the subject. Lukasevangelium p. 230.

which means "to pay a debt" when it refers to man paying it, or "to be favourable" when it refers to God accepting the payment.[1]

Grundmann is less specific. He adds the meaning of "to find pleasure, or to be acceptable on the basis of divine will". He gives δεκτός the meaning of ideal piety and removes from it the sense of a specific time reference. Isa. 61:2 does have special significance, for it has messianic meaning. According to Luke it is the acceptable time chosen by Yahweh which is present with the coming of Christ.[2]

Sanders says that δεκτόν in this verse should be seen in conjunction with δέκτος in 4:24, and that this is midrashic word analogy in operation, reflecting Jesus' clear intention of giving ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν a "climactic position" in the reading. This is further emphasized by the omission of the final phrase.[3]

The retention of ἐνιαυτὸν in this case is significant, since Luke normally uses the synonym ἔτος instead of ἐνιαυτός (Lk 12:19; 13:7; 15:29; Acts 24:17). This must be intended to show his own awareness of a direct connection between ἐνιαυτὸς ἀφέσεως of Lev. 25:10 and the ἐνιαυτὸν δεκτόν of Isa. 61:2. Support for this interpretation is found in LSJ as they say that the fact that ἔτος and ἐνιαυτός are used side by side in Lev. 25 (LXX) indicates that ἔτος means simply "year" while ἐνιαυτός retains the meaning of cycle, season, or period. Thus it can properly be translated as meaning special time without any specific designation of length.[4]

---

[1] Trocmé, p. 30.

[2] Grundmann, δεκτός TDNT v.2, pp. 58-59.

[3] Sanders, p. 98.

[4] LSJ, ἐνιαυτός, p. 567. Stone, p. 689 says that the jubilee should be understood as referring to "qualitative time", not "quantitative time".

Yoder would agree that the time reference is important, but he is more specific in its designation. He says that this "acceptable year of the Lord" in prophetic writings may have referred to some particular event either yet to come at the end of time, or in the immediate future for the Babylonian captives. But for Rabbinic Judaism, and most likely also for the listeners to Jesus as he spoke in Nazareth, the phrase meant the year of jubilee when the inequities accumulated through the years are crossed off and God's people are again together on a common level.[1]

Tannehill sees this final phrase as a summary of what has preceded. The announcement of good news, of release, and of sight, means the arrival of the "Lord's Acceptable Year". The context makes it quite clear that this means the time of salvation. How important this idea is to Luke is shown by the way in which he ends the quotation in mid-sentence. To have gone on would have called up the idea of judgment and would have disturbed the emphasis which Luke is trying to make. For Jesus not only announces this time, he brings it to pass through his own ministry. The use of the same word in 4:19 and 4:24 (δεκτός) points to the relationship between sharing in the time of salvation which Jesus announces and the acceptance of Jesus himself. People can only share in the acceptable year if they accept the one who brings it to pass with his announcement.[2]

This integral relationship between message, messenger and the year of the Lord is noted by Strobel as he describes Jesus as actually doing what the jubilee laws demanded. Lev. 25:10 (LXX) says ἕκαστος εἰς τὴν πατρίδα αὐτοῦ ἀπελεύσεσθε (and each one shall go to his own family). Strobel gives added significance to the return of Jesus to his hometown in

---

[1] Yoder, p. 36.

[2] Tannehill, p. 71; also Rese, p. 151. Note also II Cor. 6:2 where καιρὸς δεκτὸς is paralleled with ἡμέρα σωτηρίας and then interpreted by Paul as καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος.

Nazareth as a point for officially beginning his ministry. This event (which is recorded in all four gospels: Matt. 13:54; Mk. 6:1; Lk. 4:16; and Jn. 4:44) is in obedience to the jubilee decree of searching out one's paternal home.[1] Yoder agrees that this use of Isa. 61 at this particular time in this particular place is by no means arbitrary, for it does carry the double impetus of location, both geographically and textually. This text and its use here are central elements in the prophetic witness.[2]

Wacholder makes this point even more strongly. He insists that the concepts of the sabbatical cycle and the jubilee were much more prominent in the minds of First century Jews than has been generally acknowledged in recent studies.

> "It is evident that the observance of the Sabbatical years and the Jubilees during the Intertestamental times played a far larger role in the consciousness of Israel than has been hitherto recognized. Immense as were the effects of the calendar of Sabbatical cycles on the agricultural and social life of the people, its influence was no less profound on the formulation of Jewish religious beliefs. . . In the seventh year debts were cancelled, hard labour in the fields stopped, the voice of freedom was heard throughout the land as the steps of the Messiah were believed to have become more and more audible."[3]

b) V. 21 The Application

After completing the reading from Isaiah, Jesus closed the book, handed it back to the attendant and sat down in preparation to speak. The basic theme which he developed is summarized in one sentence by Luke: Σήμερον πεπλήρωται ἡ γραφὴ αὕτη ἐν τοῖς ὠσιν ὑμῶν (Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.)

---

[1] Strobel, "Ausrufung", p. 41.

[2] Yoder, p. 38. For an opposing view, see Rese, p. 148 who says that this develops Luke's Christology, but it is wrong to see the mission of Jesus as being the healing of the sick or the announcing of jubilee.

[3] Wacholder, "Chronomessianism", p. 218.

Πεπλήρωται is a perfect passive indicative from πληρόω. It has its rootage in the LXX, appearing there approximately seventy times as the translation of malah (to fill). It is used in the sense of "fulfil", as of divine promises which have been spoken by God, or in the sense of fulfilling a demand or a claim.[1] In the New Testament, this is always with reference to the will of God. It is never applied to fulfilling a human demand. It is used to complete (fulfil) prophetic sayings which were spoken with divine authority, and thus can be called the words of God.[2]

This same sense of fulfilment is an important characteristic of Luke.[3] He does not write in timeless concepts, but ties this down very firmly to an Old Testament prophecy and to a very specific event or situation.[4] In Mark, it is time which is fulfilled (Mk. 1:14), but here in Luke, it is the scriptures which are fulfilled.

Bultmann makes a distinction in the announcement of Jesus about the new age, between the idea of "irruption" as compared with "dawning". He asserts that the dawn comes with Jesus (for this is what "today" means), but the irruption is merely announced, and then Jesus waits with others for it to actually come. Nor did he claim to be the Messiah, the agent through whom God was actually bringing the kingdom. Jesus claimed only to be part of its coming. It was only after the resurrection that the church saw Jesus as the one who was bringing eschatological salvation. Thus the gospel materials were shaped to fit this understanding, making Jesus appear as Messiah during his lifetime.[5]

---

[1] Delling, πληρόω TDNT v.6, p. 288.

[2] Delling, pp. 292-295

[3] Schürmann, "Zur Traditionsgeschichte", p. 191; see Lk 18:31; 21:22; 24:44; Acts 1:16; 3:18; 13:27,29; 17:2,11; 26:22.

[4] Flender, p. 147; also Schweizer, Jesus (London: SCM, 1971), p. 22.

[5] Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament (New York: Scribners, 1959), p. 22-26.

France uses the phrase created by Florovsky "inaugurated eschatology" to describe the same situation.[1] The coming of Jesus was the beginning of the end. In his coming, everything was in principle fulfilled and it only remained for the details to be worked out. The problem is that no one can imagine a Messianic Ideal more entirely removed from Nationalistic or political hopes. France prefers the Servant imagery, seeing it as a soteriological rather than political Messianic figure, so that salvation is achieved without force, but by humiliation, suffering and death. The one note that conceivably could have allowed force was omitted by Jesus (the day of vengeance).[2]

Eltester goes back behind this appearance of "today" and recalls Deut. 30 where Moses stood before Israel urging obedience. There the offer was between life and death, good and evil (Deut. 30:15). Jesus, here at Nazareth, stands in the same role, offering life or death to his followers in their own "today" experience, according to whether or not they decide for or against him. His statement is critical. It is the self-proclamation of Jesus as the Messiah, based on a word from the Holy Scriptures, with stress upon unconditional, Godly authority. "Today . . . I stand before you as your Saviour." This is not a casual statement for Luke. He is on solid ground, for Jesus is not saying anything here that he had not already said somewhere else. The people, by rejecting belief in his Messiahship, chose their own spiritual death.[3]

Drury also goes back to the Deuteronomy occurrences, saying that "today" as it is used in the Old Testament, particularly in the narrative

---

[1] France, p. 150. France does not credit this phrase to Florovsky, but Dodd identifies it as having come from Florovsky. See C.H. Dodd, The Fourth Gospel, (Cambridge: Univ. Press, 1953), p. 447n.

[2] France, p. 135.

[3] Eltester, pp. 137-140.

books, signifies momentous occasions in the life of Israel. Its usage (says Drury) is too numerous to mention, but it shows up repeatedly in Deuteronomy. Luke follows this usage, so that "today" becomes a landmark placed at high points in his narrative in order to emphasize their importance.[1]

Luke uses σήμερον eleven times, eight of which are peculiar to him.[2] Flender also says that the word is placed strategically for emphasis. He notes that in place of Mark's bold "the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mk 1:15), Luke says, "today is the acceptable year of the Lord". He interprets this "today" of Luke as having three purposes: a) it rivets the Christ event to history, and to a past which is attested in scripture. At this very moment Old Testament scripture is reaching its goal. b) It is the actualization of the divine presence from heaven. In the announcement of the kingdom, God's presence has come "today". c) This "today" actually occurs in the ears of his audience. Each persons needs to make a response. The present moment is the time of fulfilment. It is no longer qualified by the imminence of the Kingdom of God, for the kingdom is present in the word of the proclamation.[3]

Jeremias takes all three of Flender's points and summarizes them into one concept as he interprets the scripture to mean "you are ear-witnesses that the time of God's grace is dawning, it is being fulfilled today."[4] But the people who heard could not understand. Jesus claimed the fulfilment of scripture today, that it happened in what he said and did. Yet he refused to perform decisive miracles. He healed, but he did not end all suffering. He criticized the temple, but he did not boycott religious practice.

---

[1] Drury, p. 70.

[2] 2:11; 3:22; 4:21; 5:26; 13:32,33; 19:5,9; 26:61; 23:43; 24:41.

[3] Flender, p. 151.

[4] Jeremias, Theology, p. 106.

Jesus differed from the apocalyptic seer, who focused only on the world which God will create in the future. Jesus acknowledged that the world has both good and evil, but that God is still there. He did not call for withdrawal, for his announcement of "today" makes it impossible to withdraw. The world is not the final end, nor is it to be avoided. Jesus, by announcing fulfilment "today" was calling for a radically new involvement in the world right now. Thus, the element of response in the meaning of "today" is emphasized by Schweizer. He feels that Luke knew that the event cannot simply be understood as though something had happened a long time ago that resulted in a change in the course of history. A message event can be valid only to the extent that the person hears it "today", and comes into some kind of relationship with the person who is addressing him.[1]

For Conzelmann, "today" is one of the keys to Luke. He contrasts σήμερον πεπλήρωται ἡ γραφὴ αὕτη (Lk 4:21) with ἰδοὺ νῦν καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος (II Cor. 6:2). His conclusion is that Paul identifies his own period as being the eschatological one, while Luke sees salvation already as a thing of the past. The time of salvation has come about in history, in one particular period of time. But this time (the life of Jesus) is now over and finished, even though it continues to have a determining effect upon the present.[2]

Marshall takes "today" to mean "from that particular time onward". The activity of Jesus was prophesied as taking place in the future, thus it was expected as an end-time event. It means that the whole of Jesus' activity is eschatological in the strict sense. Luke has broadened out the end of time to begin with the ministry of Jesus, and to include the period of the church and the final parousia. Salvation is not a thing of the past, it starts with Jesus, but the today of fulfilment continues right on into

---

[1] Schweizer, Jesus, pp. 24-26 and also p. 141.

[2] Conzelmann, Luke, p. 36.

the time of the church. In this today, Jesus regards himself as the fulfilment of prophecy. He is the person who is promised. He does not merely prophesy that God will save His people, he brings that salvation to them "today" by his own presence. The activity of salvation (release to captives, sight to the blind, etc.) is inseparable from Jesus himself. It is through his preaching that the power of the Kingdom of God is seen in the present.[1]

This same sense is followed by Ellis as he interprets "today" not in the exclusive sense of that one day in contrast to any other day, but in a more general meaning of time. He sees the "today" of Lk 4:21 and the "today" of Lk 23:43 as occurring within the same broad period of time. This period will continue into the present, so that others who come later also live in the "today" of salvation.[2]

Ladd gives emphasis to the importance of the "today" in Luke by contrasting the message of Jesus with the preaching of John the Baptist. While John proclaimed the imminence of a divine visitation which would bring the fulfilment of the eschatological hope and the coming of the Messianic age (Lk 3:3-17), Jesus asserted that this visitation had (in himself) actually begun. The hope of the prophets was fulfilled. God was visiting His people. Ladd says that this theme is introduced here, then Luke continues to use it as a major thrust throughout the gospel.[3]

---

[1] Marshall, Historian, pp. 121-136.

[2] E. Ellis, "Present and Future Eschatology in Luke", NTS, 13 (1965-66), p. 36. G.N. Stanton, Jesus of Nazareth in New Testament Preaching, (London: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1974), p. 65 agrees, saying that Luke emphasizes that salvation is associated with the coming of Jesus, but he does not restrict salvation to that special period of his ministry. Franklin, p. 71 interprets "today" to mean the "now" of Jesus' contemporaries, so that in Luke's mind, the time of salvation is always "now". It has a base in the past, and the events of the past remain its guarantee, but salvation is not found by linking up to a person in the past, but by submitting to the Lord of the present.

[3] G.E. Ladd, The Presence of the Future, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), p. 111.

Stonehouse places the emphasis on the eschatological perspective of the Old Testament which was expected in the dawning of a new day through the intervention of God in history. The language quoted by Jesus proclaimed him qualified (because of his anointing) to establish this new order. The enactment and observation of the year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:10; 27:24) is utilized to show how this new age functions within the present order. The use of "today" by Jesus signifies that this promised manifestation of a new order was realized. The only evidence needed was that Jesus himself proclaimed it to be so.[1]

Temple gives this new age a mystical/spiritual sense. Jesus preached that he was the Messiah foretold by Isaiah, so that in accordance with the passage, he was proclaiming the joyous news of a golden age of mercy and forgiveness in which souls would be liberated from oppression of sin and of Satan.[2]

Yoder takes this concept of a new age in a much more literal sense. Jesus, like Mary and John before him, was announcing the imminent beginning of a new regime, whose marks would be that the rich would share with the poor, that captives would be set free and people would have a new mentality (μετανοέω) if they would believe this good news. We do not know if these regulations were ever fully observed, but we do know what Jesus intended. He proclaimed a new age, with a visible, sociopolitical, economic restructuring of relationships among the people of God, achieved by the intervention of God through his (Jesus') own ministry.[3]

---

[1] Stonehouse, p. 86.

[2] Temple, p. 233.

[3] Yoder, p. 39.

3. Conclusions

We have already indicated that this event did not actually occur at this point in the ministry of Jesus, but was brought forward by Luke for theological reasons, so that it appears to take place at the start of Jesus' public ministry. This change was deliberate, and through it we believe Luke intended to emphasize both the textual theme of Isa. 61:1-2 and the chronological timing of Jesus' ministry. In setting out these conclusions we are dealing with the material from the point of view of what we believe Luke was intending to communicate by relocating the story at this point in his gospel account.

1. The Isaiah quotation must be placed in the context of the event. Luke calls specific attention to Nazareth as being the place "where he had been brought up" (4:16). The significance of this emphasis must be understood in relationship to the announcement which Jesus makes. By returning to his hometown of Nazareth, Jesus was acting in obedience to the jubilee command of Lev. 25:10 (each of you shall return to his family/property). The announcement of the acceptable year of the Lord is dramatized by this return to Nazareth. Jesus is in fact doing the announcement which he is making.

2. The symbolic timing of the event by Luke is demonstrated by the scripture text which was read. We have not accepted the basic premise of Guilding regarding the impact of the Lectionary cycle upon the selection of that text, but her arguments for dating this event in the month of Tishri give affirmation to the timing intended by Luke. Dalman's proposal that this was a substitution for the prescribed Consolation Sabbath reading also lends support to the timing of this event at (or very near) the beginning of the religious year. We conclude that Luke intended to emphasize the jubilean content of the event by having it take place at the beginning of the year (when the proclamation was to be made - Lev. 25:9) and in the hometown of Jesus (the place where the proclamation was to be

made - Lev. 25:10), using a prophetic text which would bring these two elements together in dramatic union. Thus both the timing and the location of the event are used by Luke to emphasize the jubilean content of the sermon which Jesus preached.

3. The text from Isaiah adds a third dimension of jubilean content. ἄφεσιν, εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς, ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτὸν all have important jubilean content. This content was retained throughout the Intertestamental period, although it was given a particularly messianic interpretation. But we can safely assert that the people of Nazareth knew that Jesus was talking about the Jubilee as he quoted, and then spoke from, the Isa. 61 text. (We shall later show that the reaction of the people further supports this claim.)

4 The insertion of Isa. 58:6 into the Isa. 61:1-2 text is the result of the basic similarity of theme, for it also proclaims the "acceptable day of the Lord" (58:5). The assimilation was unintentional, having been done by Luke as he quoted from memory (or it is also possible that it appeared in this form in the source which Luke was using). One can be relatively certain that the insertion was not made by Jesus at the time of reading. The assimilation indicates that the theme which was announced at Nazareth was accepted as a common theme of Jesus which had been used on other occasions, based on other texts. Thus the theme content (jubilee) should be seen as having particular importance in comprehending the full scope of Jesus' preaching.

5. At Nazareth, Jesus presented himself as standing at the beginning of a new age. Luke emphasized the critical nature of this announcement by using σήμερον to describe the event. Jesus told the congregation that the new age had arrived. The "today" which Jesus proclaimed should be seen as having taken place in (and through) his own ministry and continuing on throughout time to the parousia. Thus we also live in this kingdom age

which he announced had begun with his ministry. This kingdom is present, yet it is still unfolding and developing as people respond to the message of Jesus in their own "today" of faith. This age which Jesus proclaimed was the age which had been expected to come at the end of time, thus the term "eschatological" must now properly include the present age, and not be limited only to future events. People in this age live within the tension of the "here, but yet to be completed" nature of life in the kingdom of God. (We shall show later that Jesus issued a call for persons in this age to live by the values of God's revealed will for His People, values which Jesus made obvious by founding them in the Old Testament Jubilee.) Marshall correctly perceives this shift in emphasis as he says: "It is not the nearness of the future crisis that controls us; it should be the character of God."[1]

Thus the geographical location of the event in Nazareth, the symbolic timing at the beginning of the religious year, and the content of the text upon which the sermon was based all point to the conscious and deliberate announcement of Jubilee by Jesus. The relocation of the event to this programmatic position in the gospel of Luke indicates that Luke felt this was a critical theme, and the insertion of Isa. 58:6 into the text indicates that this was not an isolated use of the thematic material by Jesus. Thus we conclude that the theme of jubilee was indeed present in the Nazareth incident, and that it represents accurately one of the central themes of Jesus' ministry.

---

[1] Marshall, Historian, p. 136.

D. REACTION AND RESPONSE

Luke does not record the full sermon which Jesus preached at Nazareth, but he does provide enough material for us to understand the reaction of the congregation. For his purposes both the sermon and the congregational response to it are significant. Initially, πάντες ἐμαρτύρουν αὐτῷ καὶ ἐθαύμαζον (v. 22) which the RSV translates "they all spoke well of him and wondered . . . ." This response is only temporary as Jesus continues with the sermon. The congregation soon becomes angry and forces him out of the synagogue. This rapid change of attitude is one of the difficult problems in the story.

1. The Preliminary Response

a) Ἐμαρτύρουν

Ἐμαρτύρουν is an imperfect form of μαρτυρέω . Strathmann gives "to give a good report", implying a generally positive reference for the word.[1] Arndt and Gingrich support this usage as they give "to bear witness, to speak well, or to testify".[2] Brown-Driver-Briggs say that μαρτυρέω is an LXX translation of the Hebrew ēd, a word which they say has both positive and negative meanings.[3] Hill believes that the

---

[1] H. Strathmann, μαρτυρέω TDNT v.4, p. 496. The word appears twice in Luke (4:22 & 11:48) and twelve times in Acts (6:3; 10:22,43; 13:22; 14:3; 15:8; 16:2; 22:5,12; 23:11; 26:5,22). In his study, Strathmann omits Lk 11:48 and Acts 26:22 from his list of references, thus we are using our statistics in preference to his, which we believe are in error.

[2] Arndt and Gingrich, p. 494.

[3] Brown-Driver-Briggs, p. 730 gives "to testify, or to bear witness, to protest or to warn". They give ēd the meaning of "emphatically affirming", but do not state whether the primary meaning of the word is positive or negative.

Hebrew hēîd or the Aramiac asᵉhēd may be followed by either the dative of advantage (witness on behalf of) or of disadvantage (witness against). Thus, μαρτυρέω could have this same dual possibility. But, he observes, Luke never uses μαρτυρέω in the negative sense.[1]

Jeremias follows this same approach, saying that μαρτυρέω is ambiguous (as is θαυμάζω), but he favours the negative "witness against" for its meaning here.[2] The ambiguity comes from our lack of understanding of the nature of Jewish law which knows nothing of counsel for the defense or prosecution, but only witnesses who either make charges or offer defense. On the basis of the text alone we cannot tell if the witness was favourable or negative. The meaning hinges on the interpretation given to ἐθαύμαζον This can be either positive or negative as well. Jeremias sees the congregation astonished that Jesus spoke of God's mercy (τοῖς λόγοις τῆς χάριτος). Thus, they are not merely astonished, but enraged. They protested with one voice (πάντες ἐμαρτύρουν αὐτῷ) and were furious (καὶ ἐθαύμαζον) because he spoke only about God's mercy.[3]

Violet says that this is a debatable expression, demanding that it be given at least a neutral meaning, with the possibility of adverse implications. Even though ἐμαρτύρουν is primarily a neutral word, the context must dictate the meaning: "they called him an accuser, they made rebukes to him". The opposite meaning of positive amazement is simply not possible in this setting.[4]

Tannehill sees the word having an overwhelmingly favourable meaning, claiming that in v. 22 there is no sense of hostility being shown. He

---

[1] Hill, p. 161; also Flender, p. 153.

[2] Jeremias, Theology, p. 206.

[3] Jeremias, Promise, pp. 44-45.

[4] Violet, p. 257.

specifically notes the absence of Mark's "they took offence at him" (ἐσκανδαλίζοντο- Mk 6:3) and he does not believe that Luke intends ἐμαρτύρουν to carry that particular meaning here. Tannehill further sees the fact that Jesus is called "son of Joseph" (Lk 4:22) as being important for Luke's understanding. In Mk 6:2-3 there is an obvious and strong contrast between the amazement caused by Jesus' wisdom and the offence caused by his origin. While these are given emphasis in Mark, Luke ignores them so that the rejection is based upon something else.[1]

Plummer places the amazement not on what Jesus said about himself, but on the observation that the rumours which Nazareth had heard about him were in fact true. He did have power as a teacher. Their own recollections of him had led them to believe that such reports were greatly exaggerated, but now to their surprise, they find themselves admitting the truth of what they have heard. The word means neutral amazement at his speaking ability rather than any positive admiration over what was being said.[2]

b) θαυμάζω

The companion word ἐθαύμαζον is also an imperfect, coming from θαυμάζω which LSJ translates "to marvel, to wonder, to be astonished".[3] There are thirteen different words in Hebrew which are translated θαυμάζω in the LXX[4] so that it is difficult to find a straight line connection from the Old Testament to the New Testament. In addition to these thirteen the LXX took phālāh (although it is not translated by θαυμάζω) as describing a

---

[1] Tannehill, p. 54.

[2] Plummer, p. 124.

[3] LSJ, p. 785; also Arndt and Gingrich, pp. 352-353.

[4] Hatch and Redpath I, p. 626 give nāsā' -9; tāmah -4; shāmēm -4 hādār -1; tūl -1; yamar -1; māshal -1; nāzāh -1; nācham -1; shālah -1; sha'ah -1; t^{e}wah -1; kānāh -1.

sense of wonder at the works of God. It was used in a stylistic way to emphasize the greatness of an event by showing its effects upon those who saw it. Isa. 52:15 uses θαυμάσονται to denote the offence which nations and kings take at the revelation of the Servant of God. It describes the human reaction which Bertram says is always in the first instance primarily negative. Later, the word lost its theological content of marvelling at the works of God and came to express neutral surprise. Luke's use of the word is primarily in relationship to miracle stories, depicting the effect of the miracle upon those who saw it. Luke uses the word in the same way with regard to the teachings of Jesus, particularly here where the hearers are surprised at his eloquence, which they think hardly possible coming from a person of his origin.[1]

Violet expands the meaning of θαυμάζω in that he notes the simple meaning of being surprised, but he also sees the meaning of "to be rigid with astonishment" or "rigid from fear or shock". He sees this usage occurring in Lev. 26:32; Job 21:5; Dan. 4:16; 8:27. He believes that a recollection of the Hebrew tāmah (Aramaic t^{e}mah) led the LXX translator to choose θαυμάζω . However, this is complicated by the observation that the LXX often uses θαυμάζω for other Hebrew words, and it also uses different Greek words for tāmah. But in the language of the LXX, θαυμάζω means only admiration (bewundern) and without the object, it is usually rendered "astounded or surprised" (staunen, sich wundern). Violet pursues his conviction of an Aramaic source by saying that if Luke had an Aramaic source for the pericope, it most certainly would have had t^{e}mah in the text, which he then would have translated in the neutral sense of "amazement". Violet then concludes that ἐθαύμαζον must have an identical

---

[1] G. Bertram, θαυμάζω , TDNT v.3, pp.34-40. Mk 6:6 has Jesus himself being astonished (ἐθαύμαζεν) at the unbelief which he met in Nazareth. In Intertestamental usage (Sir. 11:21) θαυμάζω can refer to the offence which the righteous take at the life and conduct of the wicked and their failure to discern God's rule in the world.

meaning with ἐξεπλήσσοντο (Mk 6:2) or with ἐκπλήσσεσθαι (Matt. 13:54).[1]

Flender feels that there is an element of suspended judgment present in θαυμάζω . The term comes from Luke's background, where the word means an attitude still prior to the decision of faith. It implies being impressed by an extraordinary event, but not taking any action on it. This is not what Jesus is trying to do. He wants people to move beyond being amazed, and to take specific action. The audience at Nazareth first registered outward approval, but when faced with the decision of taking action, all they could see was the "son of Joseph", so they rejected him and what he was saying with him.[2]

Keck makes a point of the fact that Luke does not say "they were offended" (ἐσκανδαλίζοντο) as Mark does, but simply that they were baffled that Joseph's son should say such amazing things about himself and his vocation.[3]

c) υἱός Ἰωσήφ "son of Joseph"

The fact that Luke says "son of Joseph" in reporting the reaction of the crowd is itself a problem. Both Matthew and Mark report that the crowd was much more derogatory in their comments, calling Jesus: "the carpenter's son, is not his mother called Mary?" (Matt. 13:55), or "Is this not the carpenter, son of Mary?" (Mk 6:3). Leaney says that this is a deliberate alteration by Luke in order to sharpen the contrast between what the people

---

[1] Violet, p. 256.

[2] Flender, p. 156. de Jonge, p. 312 agrees that the decision at Nazareth was a decision for or against God. He says that their attitude is typical of the way in which Luke presents the Jewish people in his gospel.

[3] Keck, "Entrance", p. 478. Stahlin, σκάνδαλον TDNT v.6, p. 339f says that ἐσκανδαλίζοντο is a technical word of early Christian theology and specifically refers to the hostile reaction of people toward the gospel.

thought about the parentage of Jesus and the facts which Luke had already given in his gospel.[1]

Lightfoot notes the way in which Matthew and Mark refer to Jesus, and he comments that their usage is intended to show the derogatory attitude which they had. No man in Palestine, whether his father were living or dead, would be known by reference to his mother. Lightfoot says that this is clearly intended as an insult to Jesus.[2]

Plummer sees this as an expression of doubt in their minds coming from the incongruity of what they have just heard coming from someone whom they have always known as "the son of Joseph". He says that this one question is given as a summary representing the total range of their scepticism which was thrown at Jesus that day.[3]

The slogan "son of Joseph" is seen by Brun to be a typical expression of Jewish unbelief.[4] But Anderson says that it does not have to register contempt. He notes the difference between Luke and Mark, saying that Mark does show scorn in his statement, but that it is not necessarily present in Luke.[5]

Eltester has the Nazarenes seizing on the fact of Jesus' birth as being evidence that he is just another human being who grew up in Nazareth. Therefore, their disbelief is quite acceptable. The result is that from here on, the situation at Nazareth is without hope.[6]

---

[1] Leaney, p. 119. Lk 3:23 says "being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph". Leaney assumes that the reading of p45 at Mk 6:3 (τοῦ τέκτονος ὁ υἱὸς) is not original. Matt. and Luke may both have known of a text of Mark which contained this reading. See Metzger, p. 88f.

[2] Lightfoot, pp. 187-188.

[3] Plummer, p. 125.

[4] Brun, p. 9.

[5] Anderson, "Horizons", p. 268.

[6] Eltester, p. 139.

Violet believes that this question eliminates the presence of any sudden change in disposition on the part of the congregation. Already, from the very beginning of his speech, Jesus is confronted by a hostile, jealous, unbelieving group of people who are boiling with anger.[1]

Jeremias agrees. Jesus was not ordained, he had never studied officially, so how did he dare to presume to announce the coming of the Messianic age, or to mutilate the Holy Scriptures in this way? From the very beginning they could not receive the message, because the messenger was an offence to them.[2]

d) τοῖς λόγοις τῆς χάριτος "the words of grace"

The cause of the reaction is given as being the λόγοις τῆς χάριτος which Jesus had spoken. Whether this refers to the manner of his delivery or to the content of the words themselves is vigorously debated.

Conzelmann connects the meaning to the inward content of Jesus' words which he explains as being a proclamation of grace. He bases χάρις in the Hebrew hēn, but acknowledges that this does not help to determine how the word was used in this situation. In the LXX χάρις is never used as a theological word. Luke himself uses χαρις to characterize the message of salvation. Here the word is intentionally ambivalent and could mean either "charm" or "grace".[3] LSJ gives "grace or favour" (with both subjective and objective meanings),[4] while Arndt and Gingrich give "graciousness or attractiveness" or "grace, favour, good will in both

---

[1] Violet, p. 209.

[2] Jeremias, Promise, p. 45. The mutilation of the scriptures which Jeremias mentions refers to the omission of the final phrase of judgment.

[3] Conzelmann, χάρις TDNT v.9, pp. 391-392.

[4] LSJ, p. 1978-1979.

active and passive senses". This particular Lukan usage is placed in the former category, along with Col. 4:6 (let your speech be gracious).[1]

Flender interprets them to mean "winsome words". He believes that this is true to the Hellenistic sense, and that it commends itself here on the basis of the total external tone of the event. The observation of the congregation was totally superficial. He then contrasts this with how Luke uses these words in a technical sense elsewhere, having a very clear meaning of "message of grace" (Acts 14:3; 20:24,32). The ambiguity must be deliberate on Luke's part. The words can be seen in a purely human form, or as God's message of grace. The people of Nazareth hear only smooth winsome words, but Luke is challenging the reader of his gospel to hear the message of divine salvation.[2]

Montefiore also sees the people admiring the beauty of Jesus' words. Luke wants the men of Nazareth to acknowledge the eloquence and charm of Jesus, yet still reject him. Montefiore insists that Jesus did not actually say these words, that they must be a creation by Luke for his own theological purposes. If Jesus had actually said these things, they would have been struck by his pretentiousness, not by his charm.[3]

But this is exactly what happened, says Anderson. They were astonished that he spoke of the mercy of God. In Semitic Greek, this phrase does not mean "words full of charm", rather it must be "words of God's grace". The people were enraged that he spoke of mercy and omitted the day of vengeance. Anderson sees this response as being what holds the pericope together. Their reaction to his message was unanimous rage right from

---

[1]Arndt and Gingrich, pp. 885-886.

[2]Flender, pp. 153-154.

[3]Montefiore, p. 873.

the beginning because he had eliminated the vengeance of God on the Gentiles as part of what would happen in the future.[1]

Tannehill refers the λόγοις τῆς χάριτος back to the specific statements which were made in 4:18-19 and 21. The phrase does not refer to the form which the words of Jesus took, but to their content. By quoting from Isaiah, Jesus announces God's grace and favour, a point which Luke emphasizes even more by ending the quotation where he does. Tannehill refers to Acts 14:3 and 20:32 (τῷ λόγῳ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ in each verse), where the phrase appears to be a way of referring to the gospel.[2]

Betz sees this reflecting the ability of Jesus as a teacher, which is the second of the prophetic tasks. The gracious words which Jesus spoke are reproduced at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5: 3-12; cf. Lk 6:20-23). He sees a strong parallel between the μακάριοι of these sermons and the content of Isa. 61:1-7.[3]

Violet traces much of the misinterpretation of this phrase back to Luther, and quotes from Luther's interpretation of the gospel (edited by Eberle in 1887):

> "Es siehet mich an, also habe St. Lukas auf die Worte Ps. 45:3 "Holdselig sind deine Lippen" ein Auge gehabt. Da der Herr Christus selber kam, der das Leben und das

---

[1] Anderson, "Horizons", p. 267. Jeremias, p. 45 is in complete agreeement with this view. But Keck, "Entrance", p. 479 says that this attempt to psychologize the congregational response on the basis of what was not read is too much to ask.

[2] Tannehill, p. 72. Keck, "Entrance", p. 478 agrees, seeing this as a "well delivered speech", but does not deal with Luke's account other than for this reference. See also Masson, p. 478.

[3] Betz, pp. 113-114; blessed are the poor = 61:1 "bring good tidings to the poor"; blessed are the hungry - 61:5-6 "you shall eat the wealth of nations and possess a double portion"; blessed are ye who weep - 61:2 "to comfort all who mourn"; blessed are the meek = 61:1 "good tidings to the humble"(MT); blessed are the poor in heart = 61:1 variant "to bind up the broken hearted (bārē-lēb for nish^{e}b^{e}rē-lēb)

> rechte Licht der Menschen war Joh 1:4 . . .
> dass die Zuhörer der holdseligen Worte sich
> verwunderten. . . ."[1]

Violet claims that Luther cannot have intended anything else other than what we today mean by charming or lovely, thus the trend was set (and improperly so, in Violet's judgment).

Referring to the text itself, Violet says that this must be from an Aramaic source, and that v. 22 must be a general summary which refers back to v. 19. He then goes into a lengthy attempt to base the phrase in this Aramaic source. He believes that it is important to prove whether Jesus preached in Aramaic or in Greek. In his judgment, Luke uses χάρις consistently to mean "grace" and not simply sweetness or charm. He traces χάρις back through the LXX to the Hebrew razōn, where he says that the LXX translator always saw this as an expression of the will. He provides a detailed analysis of razōn with its many Old Testament meanings and corresponding LXX translations. His conclusion is that δέκτος, θέλημα, χάρις and εὐδοκία are all synonyms in basic content, so that in this case τοῖς λόγοις τῆς χάριτος must have either ra'ᵃwah or wᵉ'ūtah as an Aramaic background. Thus he contends that Luke was telling us something about the will of God, and was showing us that the grace of God has appeared in Jesus Christ, calling for repentance.

In this way Violet insists that there is no sudden change in the crowd's disposition, but rather that Jesus saw already in the first line of his sermon that he had an angry group in front of him. The second part of the interchange is not a radical shift in attitude, but merely an answer to the echo which comes through in the first part.[2]

---

[1]Violet, p. 252. translation: It appears to me that Luke had the words of Ps 45:3 "most gracious are your lips" in his mind. That the Lord Christ himself came, who was the life and true light of mankind, Jn 1:4; . . . that the audience was astonished at his gracious words. . . .

[2]Violet, pp. 264-269.

e) Conclusions

It has already been shown that what we are given here is a brief summary of the total sermon. Jesus had begun by announcing the time of God's grace. Our study of μαρτυρέω and θαυμάζω has shown that the congregation responded favourably to his λόγοις τῆς χάριτος.

Violet's claim that no other meaning (than negative) is possible lacks evidence to support it. The proposal of Jeremias that it was a negative situation from the very start is not proven by his reference to the Jewish law court. That in itself does not eliminate the ambiguity. To translate θαυμάζω as "furious" stretches the meaning in this context so as to be unacceptable. There had been to this point in the narrative no evidence for injecting a negative interpretation. Nor is there any basis whatever for assuming that the situation was negative and hostile from the very beginning. The words express the pleasant surprise felt by the crowd over the interpretation given by Jesus to this text. We would further add that the pleasant surprise can well extend to their response to the text which Jesus substituted for the prescribed text. The congregation certainly knew that it was a Consolation Sabbath, and they were impressed with the very appropriate alternate selection made by Jesus.

The λόγοις τῆς χάριτος which Jesus spoke refer to the announcement. We see no justification for seeing them as simply a smooth tongue and a gracious speaking manner. Jesus spoke words of grace (God's grace as demonstrated in the year of jubilee), and these words were favourably received. Luke's specific use of this phrase in Acts 14:3 and 20:32, where in each case it means the grace of God, further supports this application to the content of the words rather than to the manner in which they were spoken.

When combined with ἐμαρτύρουν and ἐθαύμαζον ; τοῖς λόγοις τῆς χάριτος gives a picture of pleasant surprise and amazement at the sermon which

Jesus had preached from this text. They had not expected such a good selection, nor such a profound interpretation of the scriptures from one of their own young men.

2. The Sermon-Dialogue

a) Ἀμήν - ἐπ' ἀληθείας "truly, - in truth"

As the crowd marvels over this opening interpretation, Jesus continues with his sermon. He quotes two proverbs, then cites two prophetic illustrations from their own religious history.

Inserted into these two proverbs are the two phrases ἀμήν λέγω ὑμῖν (v. 24), and ἐπ' ἀληθείας λέγω ὑμῖν (v. 25). Since they carry virtually identical meanings, some explanation for their separate existence is needed.

Ἀμήν is not a common word for Luke. He uses it only six times[1] as compared to thirty-one in Matthew, thirteen in Mark, and twenty-five in John.[2] O'Neill believes that the way Luke handles Mark shows that this retention of ἀμήν can hardly be accidental, for this is the only "foreign" word which is retained by Luke.[3]

Tannehill also notes the general tendency of Luke to avoid ἀμήν by either omitting it or substituting ἐπ' ἀληθείας . He sees the presence of ἀμήν as evidence of a non-Markan source, rather than suggesting that Luke added it on his own. Since this is its first occurrence in the gospel, and since Luke normally explains all unfamiliar words, it could have been at the beginning of v. 25, only to have Luke transfer it to v. 24, then

---

[1] 4:24; 12:37; 18:17; 18:29; 21:32; 23:43.

[2] Smith, p. 17. John uses the word in duplicate style in each instance, thus technically it appears fifty times, but this means only twenty-five separate locations.

[3] J.C. O'Neill, "The Six Amen Sayings of Jesus in Luke", JTS 10 (1959) p. 1.

substitute ἐπ' ἀληθείας when it reoccurs. In this way, he gives the reader the original word, then provides an immediate translation for it in the following verse.[1]

Berger has this word coming out of a tradition similar to Johannine and extra-canonical sources. This picture of the rejection of the prophet in his hometown is a principal insight into God's plan of history, and is quite fitting of the stress given by the use of ἀμήν .[2]

Schlier and Bultmann see both ἀμήν and ἀληθείας as emphasizing the truth of the statement which is uttered. Αλήθεια comes from 'ĕmĕth, and ἀμήν from 'āmēn. Schlier makes the rather strong statement that in the ἀμήν preceding the λέγω ὑμῖν of Jesus we have the whole of Christianity in nuce, for the one who accepts the truth of his word also affirms it in life.[3]

Our conclusion is that the transition from ἀμήν to ἐπ' ἀληθείας reflects the influence of two different sources, so that Luke retained each one as he received it. Luke decided to retain the unusual (for Luke) ἀμήν because it represents a characteristic form of speech for Jesus, and carries in itself particular authority.

b) The Physician and Prophet Proverbs

The presence of these two proverbs has already been noted in the

---

[1] Tannehill, pp. 57-59; so also Easton, p. 150, saying that ἀμήν is a fairly common word in Q and is retained by Matt., dropped or altered by Luke. H.J. Cadbury, "Four Features of Lukan Style", Studies in Luke-Acts, Keck and Martyn, eds. (London: SPCK, 1968), pp. 89-97 sees this exchange of synonyms as a characteristic of Luke.

[2] K. Berger, Die Amen-Worte Jesu, (Berlin: deGruyter, 1970), p. 88.

[3] H. Schlier, ἀμήν TDNT v.1, pp. 335-338; R. Bultmann, ἀλήθεια TDNT v.1, pp. 241-247. Jeremias, Prayers of Jesus (London: SCM, 1967) would not go quite as far as Schlier, but he does argue that ἀμήν introduces an authentic utterance of Jesus, pp. 112-115.

discussion of the sources. One of the problems created by the proverbs is whether they show Jesus initiating a confrontation with the congregation, or just responding to the hostility which they threw at him. Or perhaps Luke intended them to be a continuation of the sermonic material.

Anderson sees Jesus as the initiator of the confrontation since there had been no previous mention of offence at Jesus by his hearers. He supports this claim by asking if Luke would use several neutral sayings (ἐμαρτύρουν and ἐθαύμαζον) which could be interpreted differently as being sufficient to lead up to the anger expressed in v. 28. He also refers to Luke's use of ἀτενίζοντες (v. 20), saying that this is a favourite of Luke's, and it appears always to have the meaning of a steadfast gaze which implies faith or trust. This same phrase is used in the ascension story (ἀτενίζοντες ἦσαν Acts 1:10) so that Anderson sees the first part of the story leading up to the two proverbs as being essentially positive in response. The change in attitude of the crowd is seen in v. 23 and refers to the present situation.[1]

Keck also claims that Jesus unleased an attack on the congregation. He indicates that one can hardly avoid the impression that Jesus provoked a fight with his hearers. But Keck says that Jesus is referring to a future rejection. Jesus predicts that they will hear about all the great things which he is going to do in Capernaum, and they will invite him back to perform miracles here in their home town. Jesus engages in this whole conversation from the point of view that they have already rejected him.[2]

---

[1] Anderson, "Horizons", pp. 268-274. His argument is weakened by the use of ἀτενίσαντες εἰς αὐτόν in the story of Stephen (Acts 6:15) where he appears before the council and is charged with strong anti-Jewish statements. It is unlikely that the council was feeling any trust or faith as they "gazed intently" upon him.

[2] Keck, "Entrance", p. 479-480; also Grundmann, p. 122; Wellhausen, p.10. Wellhausen anticipates a trip to Capernaum, then a second appearance at Nazareth where they will still be critical and sceptical. Stonehouse, p. 73 says that Wellhausen is too clumsy in his handling of Luke when he assumes that Luke was profoundly confused about the facts.

Flender agrees that Jesus sensed their unbelief and anticipated their demand for a sign. They were so pre-occupied with the human aspect of who he was that they could not perceive any more than that. Jesus actually brought the confrontation to a head by saying what they were thinking. When he refused to meet their expectations, they expelled him.[1]

Montefiore also sees the proverb as being Jesus' attempt to express what the crowd was feeling. He interprets "heal yourself" to mean "show us, your fellow citizens, some miracles before we can credit those you have done elsewhere. Make us who know who you are, to believe in you first, before you try to come and be acknowledged as Servant of God and the leader of Israel."[2]

A very similar approach is taken by Temple. After the service was over, Jesus heard the comments which were being muttered by the people, and it is to these comments that he responds. Thus Temple ends the service itself with v. 21, and everything which follows is seen as the informal discussion which took place afterwards. The sermon itself was well received, but the attitude quickly changed when the service ended. At first, the congregation remembered his irreproachable life during the thirty years that he had lived among them. They praised his eloquence and wondered where he had received such insight and wisdom in the scriptures. But they had difficulty accepting the subject matter because they knew him too well as a common member of the community. Because of this common lowly origin, he would have to prove himself with a few signs and miracles in order to

---

[1] Flender, p. 156.

[2] Montefiore, p. 874; so also Hill, p. 169 who translates this "heal the ills in your own home town". Also Masson, p. 53. Bajard follows this general approach, but he says that the people are delighted to find who Jesus claimed to be, and are intent on exploiting the relationship for their own advantage. Bajard, "La Structure de la pericope de Nazareth en Luc 4:16-30. Propositions pour une lecture plus coherente", ETL 45 (1969), p. 167.

convince them of the truth of what he was saying. In this discussion, he implied that he was a prophet and would not be accepted in his own country. Then when he used his two examples which forcefully showed that they were being passed over in favour of the Gentiles, they exploded in a tumultuous riot. Originally they had claimed that their problem was with the humble birth and surroundings of Jesus, but now it becomes clear that the issue really was their own world view. His humble origin, trade and home, combined with his message of messianic direction was so far removed from what their vision of a messianic person and course of action would be, that they could not accept what he was saying.[1]

But Trocmé does not understand why Jesus would deliberately offend his fellow citizens, or why some of the congregation would respond with amazement while others reacted with explosive violence.[2] He believes that Jesus officially stated for the first time, here in Nazareth, that he was the Messiah whom the prophets had promised. Trocmé then ties the rage of the congregation directly to the Isaiah quotation and the sermon which Jesus preached. By claiming to be the Messiah, and then explaining the messianic task in terms of jubilee, he had directly threatened the interests of property owners in Nazareth. In Trocmé's words, "as good conservatives do, they hid behind noble pretexts to discredit the prophet from Nazareth." When Jesus insisted that the law be put into effect immediately, the rich knew what this would mean for them, so they revolted.[3]

Brun looks into this conversation and sees both parties causing the problem. V. 23 ("physician heal yourself") is actually a statement which was thrown at Jesus from the crowd. The second proverb, along with the two

---

[1] Temple, pp. 234-236.

[2] Trocmé says that the one response did not follow after the other, but that they occurred simultaneously, p. 28.

[3] Trocmé, pp. 28-29.

examples from the prophets should be seen as Jesus' response. Brun insists that ἐρεῖτε (v. 23) cannot be explained simply by the assumption that several sources are being combined, nor by assuming that Luke decided to omit the hostile reaction to the physician proverb. The physician proverb originally came as a challenge to Jesus, but was later transformed into a statement from the mouth of Jesus. It is certainly not a prophecy of a demand for a sign which will come some time in the future. This presentation of ἐρεῖτε is supported by the many other occasions when Jesus refused to respond to the demand for a sign. Brun sees this as speaking directly to Mark's description which has a qualified rejection of miracles. It might be, Brun says, that a more primitive tradition lies behind Luke's account.[1]

Tannehill contends that a future interpretation of ἐρεῖτε is necessary, and points to the mention of Capernaum. He does not believe that Luke intends to refer to any previous ministry of Jesus before coming to Nazareth. Rather, Jesus' words would be better understood as a summary of events which will follow in Luke's gospel. He insists that they could not actually have said anything about Capernaum, since the Capernaum ministry had not yet happened. He further believes that this method is common to Luke, as he predicts something before it happens. Luke announces major steps in fulfilment of God's plan ahead of time so that the relation of prophecy and fulfilment stays clear.[2]

Tannehill also feels that it is strange that Jesus' prophecy should appear as a direct quotation of what the Nazarenes will say. It would be less awkward had Jesus simply referred to this future demand rather than to quote it. Like Brun, Tannehill sees this as a challenge which was thrown

---

[1] Brun, pp. 9-11 and p. 63.

[2] Tannehill, pp. 54-58.

at Jesus. He sees the quotation as originally being only "physician, heal yourself", since this was a commonly circulated proverb of the day which was not original with Jesus.

In expanding the point, Tannehill proposes that such a challenge as v. 23 presents could not have circulated in the early church without a reply, thus the response of v. 24. The εἶπεν δέ of v. 24 is not necessary as it now stands, but it would have meaning if v. 23 were seen as a challenge directed at Jesus. Εἶπεν δέ which is rather common to Luke may simply be his equivalent of Mark's καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς.[1]

Stonehouse thinks that the Christological element is important in the rejection. The Jewish hearers could see the contact of the messianic age with their own age, but when Jesus claimed to be the instrument of that manifestation, they became angry. It is the place which Jesus claimed for himself within the Kingdom that caused the problem at Nazareth.[2]

Jeremias agrees that there is Christological significance, but he believes that it is with the prophetic motif. He notes that Jesus did not reject the prophet description for himself. While prophet was not a full description of the task for which he had been sent, he does include himself within the prophetic ranks. When Jesus used this proverb, he was referring to his own standing in Nazareth.[3] But Barrett would argue the point. He does not feel that the "no prophet" proverb will support that kind of self-reference by Jesus. It must be seen as a common proverb and nothing more. In using this proverb, Jesus is no more saying that he is a prophet, than by saying "physician, heal yourself" he is saying that he is sick.[4]

---

[1] Tannehill, p. 63

[2] Stonehouse, p. 75; so also Caird, Luke, p. 86.

[3] Jeremias, Theology, p. 78.

[4] Barrett, Holy Spirit and Gospel Tradition (Edinburgh: SPCK, 1947), p. 97.

Our conclusions to this point have shown that Jesus announced the time of God's grace in jubilee terminology and that the initial response of the congregation was positive. But as he continued to speak about the kingdom of God they demanded proof through the working of miracles that the kingdom of which he was speaking was, in reality, present here and now. Someone in the congregation verbalized this need for proof. The people at Nazareth had their own ideas about what the Kingdom of God would be like and about what would happen to them when it did come, and they were expecting this kingdom which Jesus had just announced to fulfil these expectations. The demand for miracles was so that they could believe what Jesus was saying, and also receive the blessings of God which they believed would come to them when the kingdom arrived. The response of Jesus is a firm NO, indicating that their expectations regarding the Kingdom of God were in error. It is not to be a time when God showers blessings upon them. Thus Jesus is beginning to redefine the meaning of the Kingdom of God, and as he proceeds, their anger builds. We do not believe that it is at all consistent with the ministry of Jesus to have him initiate the conflict at this time. There is no basis in the narrative for such a claim, and as our explanation shows, it is completely unnecessary. We see Jesus taking a stand on a particular issue (the nature of the Kingdom of God), and accepting the inevitable hostility which comes with rejection of the stand. We do not interpret this to mean that Jesus was the initiator of the conflict.

c) The Elisha and Elijah Illustrations

As Jesus continues with his sermon, the meaning and implications of the Kingdom of God become increasingly clear. He next gives two striking illustrations which document what he has been saying. The prophets are well known, and the stories easily identified so that additional details are unnecessary. The Elijah story is from I Kings 17, and the Elisha account is found in II Kings 5.

Luke, in telling the story, has Jesus saying that the famine in the days of Elijah lasted for three years and six months. The text of I Kings 18:1 simply says that the famine ended "in the third year". James 5:17 also calls attention to the three years and six months time period. Dalman says that this particular designation comes from a Midrash. Three and a half is equal to half a Septennial, and is a common phrase meaning "a long time". Jesus quoted from the Midrash because he wanted to emphasize the symbolic time element.[1]

Tannehill suggests that these verses were originally separate from the preceding verses because v. 24 deals with the prophet relationship to his own πατρίς, while vv. 25-27 deal with the prophet relationship to Israel. The contrast is pushed further by seeing that v. 24 speaks to man's rejection of the prophet, while vv. 25-27 refer to times when prophets were sent by God to non-Israelites. This shows how Luke understood God's plan to send the gospel to the Gentiles. It would happen only through the rejection of the gospel by the Jews. The verses do not originate within the context of Jesus' ministry, but reflect the influence of the early church debate over the Gentile mission. Luke sees here the intersection of the rejection of man with the fulfilment of God's purposes. Jesus goes elsewhere, not because of bad conditions at Nazareth, but because it is God's plan that Jesus and the gospel should not be limited to Israel. He was rejected because he dared to announce this fact to the synagogue congregation.

In doing this, Luke has changed the reason for the rejection. It is not that he comes from their own town, and it is not anger over his refusal to respond to their demand for miracles. The rejection comes

---

[1] Dalman, Jesus, pp. 45-46. For additional discussion on the significance of $3\frac{1}{2}$, see Dalman, Arbeit und Sitte in Palestine I, (Hildesheim: Olms, 1964), pp. 195, 314, 519.

because the contrast with the Gentiles has put them in a bad light. They know it and react by rejecting him.[1]

The position taken by Jeremias is closely related to this. He agrees that the illustrations are orientated toward the Gentiles. Luke has been giving indications of this throughout the early stages of his gospel. Simeon speaks of the Gentiles (2:32); John the Baptist mentions them (3:6); the genealogy of Jesus is traced back to Adam (3:38); all of which prepares the reader for this theme which announces that the gospel is for all people. Jeremias sees God bypassing Israel in order to extend mercy to the Gentiles. The full horror of the threat that Gentiles will take the place of the favoured sons of the kingdom at the final judgment can be measured by the fact that no Jewish scholar or apocalyptist had ever dared to suggest such a thing. John the Baptist is the only one to whom such a saying is attributed (Matt. 3:9).[2]

Keck says that the Elijah-Elisha illustrations implicitly say that God has abandoned his people as a people for the sake of individual Gentiles.[3] Ellis agrees, saying that the prophet illustrations emphasize the true meaning of the rejection at Nazareth. God will pass over rebellious Israel and give his blessings to the Gentiles.[4]

This theme of Jewish rejection is picked up by Betz as well, who says that Jesus used these stories to show that if the local people reject

---

[1] Tannehill, pp. 59-62.

[2] Jeremias, Promise, p. 51.

[3] Keck, "Entrance", p. 480.

[4] Ellis, p. 98.

him, he will be forced to continue his ministry as a teacher and a healer in other towns.[1]

This movement toward other towns is picked up by Hill. He explains the rage of the Jews as being a parochial response to worldwide mission. When Jesus says that he will be carrying out a ministry acceptable to God only if he does not confine himself to his own people, they cannot accept what this means. The explanation must be seen through Luke's own theology. Gentile success must be built upon Jewish rejection. Hill sees this as giving continuity to the story. The scripture, plus Jesus' affirmation that jubilee has come, evokes a positive response, for the people want immediate (and local) fulfilment. But Jesus refuses their demand by asserting that the jubilee concept is to transcend his own people and land so that it includes the Gentiles as well. Irritated at what this means, the people force him to leave.[2]

But this concept that the inclusion of the Gentiles means the rejection of Israel is not shared by everyone. It does not have to be seen as an either/or situation. Eltester says that the reference to Elijah and Elisha meant that God was a universal God. The heathen Gentiles are able to stand beside Israel because God loves them also. This, Eltester says, was too much for Nazareth to accept. They felt that the blessings of God were for Jews and for no one else.[3]

Marshall agrees as he observes how frequently the compassion of Jesus

---

[1] Betz, p. 111; also Creed, p. 66. V. Hasler, "Amen, Juden-Mission und Juden-Schuld", ThZ 24 (1968), pp. 173-190 says that Luke has aligned his sights on the later path of the gospels, which leads out of the synagogues into the Gentile world. The Elijah-Elisha examples contain two important precedents showing Godly selection and pre-visioning of the offering of salvation to the Gentiles. Ellis, p. 96 also identifies this rejection theme, but he makes it two sided. What was originally a rejection of Jesus by his own people becomes a rejection of them by him.

[2] Hill, pp. 169-177.

[3] Eltester, p. 139.

went out to non-Jews as well as to Jews. This incident shows the ultimate scope of the ministry of Jesus. The vision of Gentiles in the Kingdom of God is taken over by Luke from the tradition as he includes sayings of Jesus (13:28; 24:47) in addition to this specific event from Jesus' life.[1]

Yoder says that Jesus appeals to prophetic precedent here (just as he had done in his selection of scripture) in proclaiming the opening of the new age to the Gentiles. The new age is for all people, and the hesitance of the Nazarenes (caused by their familiarity with Jesus and his family) only serves to dramatize this wider proclamation.[2]

Sanders takes the same approach, but goes back to the hermeneutical axioms of Qumran to explain the situation. He sees the Elijah-Elisha material as being a midrash on Isa. 61:1-2. Jesus rejected the widely accepted 2nd Qumran axiom which prescribed blessing on Israel and judgment on their enemies. He applied the Melchizedek m^{e}basser imagery to himself, insisting that ἄφεσις will be for whomever God chooses. With the prophetic application, rooted in the Amos, Elijah, Isaiah and Jeremiah prophetic model (in contrast to the Qumran and 1st century model) Jesus turned a very popular text of hope for Israel into a judgment upon his own people and their assumptions about faith.[3]

Rice sees Jesus insisting that the privileges of the Messianic kingdom are not to be obtained by accident of birth, but by new birth (which he describes as moral fitness). Thus, with Yoder and Marshall et al., Rice says that the kingdom is not the peculiar possession of Israel, but is open to all people of every nation. The Jew, if he does not respond with moral uprightness, will miss out altogether (as will any other person).

---

[1] Marshall, Historian, p. 10.

[2] Yoder, pp. 39-40.

[3] Sanders, pp. 97-98.

This concept was so foreign to Jewish ideas, and so unpatriotic, heretical and revolutionary, that the people of Nazareth felt forced to react violently. In so doing, they proved that they had not heard the message nor accepted the messenger.[1]

Crockett gives this new relationship between Jew and Gentile a different description. He sees the illustrations as a prolepsis not simply of the Gentile mission, and certainly not of God's rejection of Israel. Rather, he uses the term "reconciliation", the cleansing of the Gentiles which makes it possible for Jew and Gentile to live and eat together in the new age. This is the programmatic announcement in the mouth of Jesus. He indicates that the initiative shown by Elijah and the widow (carried on by Elisha and Naaman) is being carried to fulfilment by Jesus. Crockett sees Luke 7 (Jesus and the Centurion) as a pre-resurrection anticipatory example of the same fulfilment, and Acts 10 (Peter and Cornelius) as a post-resurrection fulfilment.[2]

In coming to these conclusions, Crockett places considerable importance on the famine reference. He observes that Luke's terminology ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν goes beyond the Old Testament account, but that it parallels Acts 11:28 in the words which are used. In both cases, the famine served to bring widely disparate people together. Elijah goes to a Gentile widow and both are fed. In Acts 11, famine relief comes to Judea from the Gentile world, thus documenting again Luke's emphasis on Jew-Gentile relationships. For Luke, God's Spirit and the presence of the kingdom are manifest when Jew and Gentile are brought together with divine purpose. Crockett acknowledges that Elijah was sent and that this can be seen as a preview

---

[1] E. Rice, "Fulfilled in Your Ears", ET 29, (1918), p. 46.

[2] L. Crockett, "Luke 4:25-27 and Jewish-Gentile Relations in Luke-Acts" JBL 88 (1969), pp. 178-183.

for a Gentile mission, but he sees the ultimate purpose being table fellowship, which to him is more than simply mission.[1]

Flender describes the passage as speaking to a different theological problem. It deals with the question of whether or not the first generation of eyewitnesses had any advantage over those who came to believe later in time. Luke tells this story in order to communicate a resounding NO. Even those who were geographically closest to Jesus had no special advantage. They saw him, yet they were blind to him.[2]

Franklin takes yet a different approach. The reference to the prophets cannot mean that Jesus was turning from his own people to the Gentiles, because in fact he did not. Elijah and Elisha did not turn their backs on Israel. They remained prophets to their own people and their faithfulness is not to be judged by their successful activity outside Israel and corresponding lack of success at home. The same is true for Jesus. His own lack of success with the people of Nazareth (who are symbolic of Israel) does not affect the validity of the claims which he made. Nor does his mention of the Gentiles mean that God's salvation has gone from Israel to the Gentiles. Certainly the Jews rejected Jesus, but the key is to be seen in the final phrase "passing through the midst of them, he went away" (v. 30). They could not stop him nor frustrate God's purposes for his life. He continued on his way toward ultimate glorification. This, Franklin says, may carry thoughts of a wider ministry, but the main impact is not a Gentile mission, but the continued progress of Jesus toward exaltation. The climax is not the turning of Jesus from Israel to the Gentiles, for Luke has little interest in the Gentiles as

---

[1] Crockett, "Luke 4:25-27", pp. 178-180.

[2] Flender, p. 155.

such. The point is that rejection does not mean that Jesus is no longer God's final action even against those very persons who do the rejecting.[1]

Our study shows that there is one common theme which runs through most analyses of these verses. This is the meaning of these illustrations for the spiritual status of the Gentiles. Franklin loses this because his concern for the ascension and glorification of Jesus pushes the earthly ministry into a position of secondary importance. The main issue revolves around whether or not the rejection of the Jews is necessary in order to incorporate Gentiles into the family of God. This is somewhat tempered by the observation that most Jews of the first century would have seen very little difference, for any incorporation of Gentiles was equal to rejection of the Jews.

These two prophetic illustrations should be seen as continuation of the sermon which was begun in v. 21. They explain further some of the meaning which Jesus gave to "the acceptable year of the Lord". The refusal to perform miracles had explained one dimension of what the Kingdom of God would be like. These prophet illustrations add a second dimension by explaining who will be included in the kingdom. Thus they belong here as an integral part of the presentation by Jesus. He is pointedly declaring that the gates of the kingdom are not so narrow so as to include only Jews. This means that membership in the Kingdom of God must be based on something other than familial or blood ties. Jesus had taken away the exclusive standing of the Jews before God (based on their blood ancestry), and has said that the Gentiles stand equal with the Jews before God and that they will be included in the kingdom. The prophet illustrations say very clearly that there is a new way to define the membership of God's people. The old definitions need to be discarded in this new time of God's jubilee grace.

---

[1] Franklin, pp. 143-144.

3. Concluding Response

When the congregation heard that the jubilee age called for obedience on their part, rather than simply receiving the anticipated blessings of God, they were unhappy. But when they heard that in this new age the Gentiles would be equal with them in the sight of God, they reacted with anger, trying to get rid of Jesus.

This violent reaction is seen by Weiss as being completely impossible from an historical point of view. That the Nazarenes, through a simple reference to Old Testament history which contained a threat to take the gospel to the Gentiles, could be stirred up to such a rage that they would attempt to commit murder is unthinkable. Weiss accounts for its presence by referring to some of the other times when Jesus' life was threatened.[1] Luke needed something from the tradition where there was an assault on Jesus, so he connected the murderous intent with the actual facts of the situation and created this conclusion. It could not have been factual, because it is much too early in Jesus' ministry for such a strong reaction.[2]

Brun takes an almost identical approach, but does not attribute the original telling of the story in this form to Luke. He says that the conclusion was created by the tradition and was then sharpened up until it appeared as we now see it in Luke's gospel. Support for this claim is made by saying that Nazareth does not have a hill where this could have

---

[1] Lk. 6:11; 19:47; 20:19; 22:1; plus Matt. 26:4; 27:1; Jn. 3:30; 8:59; 10:31; 11:53 all note attempts to either arrest, stone or kill Jesus.

[2] B. Weiss, Die Quellen des Lukasevangeliums, (Berlin: Gotta'sche Buchhandlung Nachfolger, 1907), p. 202.

taken place. He concludes that it might be possible that there had been an actual attempted murder against Jesus which had occurred somewhere else and was later linked with the unbelieving response at Nazareth.[1]

Bultmann sees this as a creation by Luke in order to produce basic continuity between one scene and the next. The rapid appearance of Jesus in Capernaum is linked to his equally rapid exit from Nazareth by means of this simple, dramatic explanation.[2]

Tannehill points to the words which are used in describing this incident as being proof that it is the work of Luke himself. Ἐπλήσθησαν (from πλήθω) is found twenty-two times in Luke-Acts and only twice in the rest of the New Testament. Ἀνίστημι is a favourite word in Luke-Acts.[3] In addition, διέρχομαι, ἄγω, πορεύομαι and μέσος are all common Lukan terms. Thus the language gives no indication of a pre-Lukan tradition. But it is unlikely that Luke had any specific knowledge on which to base these verses. He simply embellished the tradition of rejection by describing what he assumed could have happened.[4]

Anderson matches this conclusion in v. 30 with the introduction in v. 14. As Jesus came in the power of the Spirit, so he escapes from his would be killers by the power of the Spirit. The correspondence between

---

[1]Brun, p. 15 I.H. Marshall, The Gospel of Luke (Exeter: Paternoster, 1978), p. 190 notes the geographical problem, observing that Nazareth is not built on a hill, but on the side of a valley. He adds that there would have been suitable cliffs in the neighbourhood. But others uphold the accuracy of the geography: C. Kopp, Holy Places of the Gospels (Edinburgh: Nelson, 1961), p. 50. G.A. Smith, Historical Geography of the Holy Land, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1931), pp. 433-434. Edersheim, p. 456, and Ragg, p. 62 each identify the cliff where this event supposedly took place as being just behind the present Maronite church. Ragg adds that the cliff is about forty feet high.

[2]Bultmann, History, p. 361.

[3]Tannehill, p. 61; Marshall, Luke, says that it especially has hostile meaning for Luke, and refers to Acts 6:9; 7:54,57. p. 190.

[4]Tannehill, p. 61.

the opening and the closing, which alludes to Jesus as the bearer of the Spirit then closes with an example of that Spirit's power, indicates that Luke intends for this pericope (including its conclusion) to have symbolic importance. In this, the reader is given a clue to the final end where a triumphant consummation is sure.[1]

Edersheim takes a very practical approach to explain the outcome. He says that the provision which merited instant death without trial was reserved for open blasphemy, which certainly does not apply here. The intention of the crowd was to push Jesus "accidentally" over the cliff. On the way there, Edersheim continues, the road divides. Jesus gave the crowd a "look of commanding dignity", allowed himself to be pushed no further and turned to the right (away from the cliff) going off unharmed. Edersheim believes that this shows that the Nazarenes did not intend any deliberate harm to Jesus or they would not have allowed him to walk away so easily.[2]

The miraculous nature of the escape is stressed by many writers who see this as the direct intervention of God to prevent Jesus' premature death.[3]

---

[1] Anderson, "Horizons", p. 271; Franklin, p. 65n, takes a view that seems very similar to this. The difference is in emphasis or concept of mission. Anderson emphasizes a triumphant consummation in terms of having Jesus complete the mission for which he was sent. Franklin seems to be more concerned that Jesus should escape misfortune so that he could be glorified. We do not agree with Franklin's seeming overconcern with glorification.

[2] Edersheim I, p. 456; Ragg, p. 62 refers to Jn 18:6 as being another place where Jesus' commanding look is felt. (But Jn 18:6 implies that it was the word of Jesus which caused the reaction!) Caird, p. 87 says that the majesty of his commanding presence overawed them.

[3] A. Loisy, L'Evangile selon Luc, (Paris: Emile Nourry, 1924), p. 848, "Christ escapes in the glory of his immortality from the death which the Jews wished to inflict on him."; Dibelius, p. 110, "the escape shows traits of miraculous self-help"; Montefiore, p. 875, "the escape shows divine power more extraordinary than any of the healings."; Gilmour, p. 95, observes simply that Jesus was "miraculously invulnerable to mob action".

It does seem that a response of this intensity is premature so early in the gospel. One also suspects that the divine intervention elements are more a reflection of the tradition than they are accurate accounts of what happened. The conclusion of the Nazarene incident should be seen as severe rejection which was embellished by the tradition over the years until it took on the character of radical action against the person of Jesus. Luke accepted the story as he received it, then rewrote it in his own words. Since the rejection story harmonised with the theme of rejection which Luke included at several paoints, he retained the ending here, presenting it as a dramatic conclusion to an equally dramatic event.

4. Conclusions

Summarizing the results of this portion of our study, we have found that the initial response to the words of Jesus was positive (v. 22). One member of the congregation then asked Jesus for evidence of this jubilee age which he had just proclaimed (v. 23). This challenge came from a selective memory of what jubilee actually meant. It ignored the critical element of obedience and focused only on the promise of blessing (which was intended to follow the expression of obedience). Jesus refused the demand, (v. 24), thus beginning to redefine the meaning of jubilee in terms of obedience to the will of God and not simply receiving the blessings of God. This began to upset the congregation.

Then Jesus used two illustrations from the prophets to redefine another element of jubilee (vv. 25-27). He told them that the Gentiles are to be included. By doing this, Jesus effectively removed the very thing which had provided the most security for the Jews in their standing before God (their family ancestry). Jesus did not reject the Jews, but he did establish a new criterion for determining how one becomes a member of the people of God. It is universal in scope and is based on faith and obedience, not on blood parentage. This led to total rejection by the

congregation, for he had told them that they were no longer the elect, special people of God.

Because of these things (redefinition of the meaning of jubilee, and the inclusion of the Gentiles), Jesus is forcibly removed from the synagogue and from the town (vv. 28-30). Over the years, the story of his departure from Nazareth was embellished until by the time Luke received it, it had become a story of attempted murder. Luke retained this ending because of its theological significance rather than its historical accuracy.

E. THE CHRISTOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF LUKE 4:16 - 30

It has been shown that the positioning and content of Luke 4:16-30 is primarily Lukan responsibility, containing significant theological implications for his presentation of Jesus. This makes it possible to derive from this material basic insights into Luke's perception of the person and ministry of Jesus. Tannehill believes that the Isaiah quotation provides the key for such an answer.[1]

> "Luke chose to make this quotation the title under which the whole ministry of Jesus is placed. He did so because it expresses clearly certain important aspects of his own understanding of Jesus and his ministry. It presents Jesus as the one anointed with the Spirit and so commissioned by God to announce and establish the time of God's favour through the preaching of good news to the poor, and the proclamation of the time of "release" which includes both Jesus' work of healing and his declaration of God's forgiveness. . . . We receive a rather complete summary of Luke's understanding of the meaning of the events of Jesus Christ."

---

[1] Tannehill, pp. 72-73.

But within this account of the Nazareth experience, there are elements of several different titles which are used to describe the Christology of Jesus: Messiah, and Prophet.

1. Messiah

Christians have most frequently applied the title "Messiah" to Jesus. Whether or not Jesus ever used this title for himself is the subject of continuing debate. Our purpose here is not so broad so as to resolve that debate, but it is simply to identify those messianic elements which are present in this pericope.

a) ἔχρισέν με

The Greek word Χριστός is derived from the root χρίω meaning "to rub, to smear, to anoint".[1] Χριστός is the translation of the Hebrew mashiah, which means "the anointed one".[2] In the Old Testament, it was used primarily to designate the King of Israel, who is called "the anointed one of Yahweh", but anyone to whom God had given a special message for his people can be called mashiah. It is applied to a priest (Ex. 28:41), to Elisha (I Kgs. 19:16), and even to the pagan king Cyrus (Isa. 45:1).[3]

The direct connection of the anointed person (messiah) with the messianic gift of the Spirit does not fully emerge until in Intertestamental literature.[4] But in making this connection it is very clear that the

---

[1] LSJ, p. 1742.

[2] O. Cullmann, The Christology of the New Testament (London: SCM, 1963) p. 112; van Unnik, p. 104; Barrett, Holy Spirit, p. 42. Barrett says that the word is rarely used metaphorically, that the anointing was always with a physical medium such as oil. The phrase "to anoint with the Holy Spirit" is unknown in the Old Testament, but the connection between the Holy Spirit and anointing would have been quite obvious, p. 42.

[3] Cullmann, Christology, pp. 113-114.

[4] I Enoch 49:3; Ps. Sol. 17:42; 18:8; Zad. Frag. 2:10; Test. Levi 18:2-14; Test. Judah 24:3.

kingly essence in messianic expectation was retained. The anointing of the Messiah would be a royal experience of the final days.[1]

b) The announcement of the reign of God

The second messianic element in the Nazareth pericope is the announcement of the beginning of the reign of God (Lk 4:21). The specific messianic task was quite diverse, so that it did not have one clear cut isolated function. But common to all the varied tasks was the conviction that the Anointed One of God would appear as a ruler and judge who would exalt the lowliness of Israel and drive out the heathen, thus establishing the new kingdom of glory.[2] It was during the exile that the Jews first began to postpone this promise till the distant future, connecting this political-literal salvation with the end of time. Ezekiel especially conferred upon the future king the exact characteristics which were later used to describe the Messiah.[3]

During the Intertestamental period this messianic expectation grew in intensity. Ps. Sol. 17-18 give a specifically eschatological orientation, even using Χριστός as a title for the future king who was to be a descendant of David.[4]

> "Behold, O Lord and raise up unto them their king, the son of David . . . . that he may reign over Israel thy servant, that he may shatter unrighteous rulers, and that he may purge Jerusalem from nations that trample her down to destruction, Wisely, righteously, he shall thrust out sinners from the inheritance . . . he shall gather together a holy people . . . and shall divide them according to their tribes upon the land, . . and he shall have the heathen nations to serve him under his yoke. . . ."[5]

---

[1] France, p. 87.

[2] Lohse, p. 192.

[3] Ezek. 37:21-28; Cullmann, Christology, pp. 114-115.

[4] Cullmann, Christology, p. 115.

[5] Ps. Sol. 17:21-33; text from Charles, Pseudepigrapha, pp. 649-650.

At Qumran, 11Q Melchizedek describes the Messiah as "the herald, the anointed one of the Spirit". This leads Aune to say:

> "11Q Melchizedek provides the first piece of conclusive evidence before 70 AD that the proclamation of glad tidings could be a significant aspect of the messianic task. . . it belongs to the spectrum of functions which the designation mashiah connoted in the first century AD. The evidence provided by 11Q Melchizedek demands that the central characteristic of Jesus' earthly ministry---the proclamation of the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God---be considered a messianic function."[1]

There were, however, many diverse concepts of this proclamation function. Sometimes it was thought that the actual bringing in of the kingdom would be God's own miraculous deed, while at other times it was thought to be the work of an "anointed one" who was to appear and to work at God's commission. Thus it was not always clear whether the anointed one actually brought the new age, or simply announced that it was coming.[2]

The announcement of the dawn of a new age (4:21) when connected with the claim to be anointed by the Spirit (4:18) give this particular event clear messianic significance. But the messianic content of this text should not be interpreted in such a way as to say that Jesus unquestioningly adopted the current messianic beliefs of the first century. It is our purpose here merely to identify the messianic aspects of this event as told by Luke. The issue of Jesus' own messianic self-identification is beyond the scope of this particular study. It is sufficient here to state that the messianic element was present in the ministry of Jesus, but that he was extremely reticent about its use in public. He did not accept the popular messianic understandings of his own day, and consciously tried to

---

[1] D.E. Aune, "A Note on Jesus' Messianic Consciousness and 11Q Melchizedek", The Evangelical Quarterly 45 (1973), p. 165. But Davies says that Qumran knew of no person who actually associated the kingdom with himself as Jesus did in his announcement. W.D. Davies, The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount (Cambridge: Univ. Press, 1964), p. 432.

[2] Lohse, p. 188.

to reinterpret the messianic role. This should not be seen as rejection of the messianic role itself, but rather as reinterpretation of its meaning for his own life.[1]

2. Prophet

The identification of Jesus as prophet is very common in the gospels and should not be surprising. Israel was looking for a prophet, and when Jesus appeared it was very easy to project onto him the prophetic hopes that were awaiting fulfilment. There were throughout the country in the first century various persons claiming to be the Messiah. Generally, such persons were regarded as prophets.[2] Luke writes some years after

---

[1] This messianic question is still hotly debated. Conzelmann says that this text presents Luke's messianic program. Luke, p. 180. Rese says that it is beyond doubt that Luke is presenting Jesus as the Messiah, p. 222; and Kümmel says that from the very beginning Jesus acknowledged himself to be the Messiah. Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament, (London: SCM, 1966), p. 98. But Käsemann says that there can be no possible grounds for saying that Jesus thought of himself as the Messiah. All texts containing messianic references are creations of the early Christian community. Käsemann, "The Problem of the Historical Jesus", Essays on New Testament Themes (London: SCM, 1964), p. 43. Schweizer agrees that these are early church creations. Jesus, p. 14. But we do not agree. We believe that the early church used this title because they saw how Jesus had, on occasion, applied the concept to himself, although not necessarily using the specific title. Beasley-Murray is astonished at Käsemann, asking how anyone could possibly want further grounds for saying that Jesus thought of himself as the Messiah than that he declared the presence of the Kingdom of God. Beasley-Murray, "Jesus and the Spirit" Melanges Bibliques (Gembloux: Duculot, 1970), p. 477. He argues that the role which Jesus ascribed to himself was far greater than that accorded to the Messiah by the prophets. Cullmann points to the political nature of the temptations (especially Lk 4:9-10) to show that Jesus was certainly aware of the common messianic expectations of his day, but that he saw the hand of Satan in them. He was afraid that any attempt to declare himself as the Messiah would lead to a false conception of his ministry, so he exercised restraint, if not direct rejection, on the use of that title. Christology, pp. 124-125. Wrede attempted to build a case saying that Jesus understood himself to be the Messiah, but that he deliberately tried to keep this knowledge hidden. W. Wrede, Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1963), pp. 214-216. Wrede overstates his case. Jesus did not deny his messianic presence, but he did try to redefine it in his own terms. Dunn agrees, saying that Jesus did not embrace the concepts of Messiah which were widespread in his day, but that the confession that Jesus is the Messiah does go back to Jesus himself. He discouraged the use of the title, because the common understanding of Messiah meant a misunderstanding of his role as he himself understood it. Dunn, Unity, pp. 41-42.

[2] Josephus, Antiquities xx.87 and xx.169.

the earthly ministry of Jesus had ended. He had had opportunity to reflect upon the Christological interpretations which had been given to Jesus and to evaluate them in light of the resurrection. His presentation of the life of Jesus must be examined in light of the later events which occurred. His gospel needs to be seen in the dual purpose of teaching, as well as correcting the improper interpretations regarding Jesus which were being circulated among the people.

One of the connections which Luke makes between Jesus and the Old Testament is the use of the prophet model. In his gospel, "prophet" is used without reservation to refer to Jesus' vocation.[1] In this pericope, Jesus identifies himself with a prophetic text from the Jewish scriptures, claims the presence of the Spirit upon himself, uses illustrations from two prophets of Jewish history, and compares his own fate with the fate of a prophet. Thus, within this pericope alone, there is sufficient evidence for exploring futther the concept of prophet as a Christological title.

a) The Intertestamental Period and Prophetic Expectations

To appreciate the importance of the prophetic designation, it is necessary to understand the situation into which Jesus came. The Jew of Jesus' day believed to a considerable extent that prophecy had been withdrawn from Israel, but that it would return with the dawn of the new age. Zech. 13:2-6; Ps. 74:9 and II Baruch 85:1-3 tell of this cessation of prophecy which was going to come upon the land. But Mal. 4:5-6 gives the promise that before the end time, Elijah will come (implying a return of the Spirit). Joel 2:28-29 echoes this same "return of prophecy" theme. The expectation

---

[1] Lk 4:24; 7:16; 7:39; 13:33; 24:19. P. Minear, To Heal and to Reveal, (New York: Seabury, 1976), p. 102. He notes that the designation "prophet" describes Jesus' role without creating any difficulty or basic incompatibility with other categories which are often used.

that Elijah will come with warnings is picked up in Ecclesiasticus 48:10.[1]

In the Intertestamental period, the need for a prophet had become critical. The anticipation of the coming of the prophet affected various aspects of national life.

> "And they thought it best to tear it (the altar) down lest it bring reproach upon them, for the Gentiles had defiled it. So they tore down the altar, and stored the stones in a convenient place on the temple hill until there should come a prophet to tell what to do with them." I Macc. 4:45-46

> "After the death of Judas, the lawless emerged in all parts of Israel; . . . Thus there was great distress in Israel, such as had not been since the time that prophets ceased to appear among them." I Macc. 9:23 & 27.

> "And the Jews and their priests decided that Simon should be their leader and high priest for ever, until a trustworthy prophet should arise, . . ."
> I Macc. 14:41.

Thus, worship, justice, politics and leadership was affected by this absence of the prophetic voice in Israel.[2] When they looked into the future, they had high hopes for what life would be like when this prophet would arrive:

> "For nought but peace shall come upon the land of the good; and the prophet of the mighty God shall take away the sword."
> Sibylline Books III 780-781.

The situation finally became so desperate that "heirs" to the prophets were introduced. These heirs served as chroniclers. In Rabbinic thought the function of prophecy was taken over by "the men of the Great Synagogue" in their capacity to transmit the Mosaic oral law.[3] This took care of the

---

[1] The Mishnah interprets this as restoring the tribes of Judah, as gathering together the refugees and exiles. Eduyoth 8:7.

[2] It should be noted that prophecy did not completely disappear, for seers would emerge and foretell the future; the Essenes had schools of prophecy; and there were many wandering individuals. During the Jewish wars, Jesus, Son of Ananias mourned and wailed in the streets of Jerusalem, and there were many other prophets of both deliverance and doom. See Hahn, p. 353.

[3] Mishnah Aboth 1:1.

secondary roles, but the essential office, the revelation of God's will to men, did not come by human means because no one was thought worthy to receive the Holy Spirit. And if such a person were to exist, his generation was too unworthy to receive his words.[1] The substitute for revelation which was recognized by the rabbinic teaching became the bat-qōl (the heavenly voice).

> "Since the death of the last prophets . . . the Holy Spirit ceased from Israel, but they received messages by means of the heavenly voice". Tosephta Sotah 13:2.[2]

In this Intertestamental period there is only one place where prophecy is attributed to a person. In the Testament of Levi, it speaks of John Hyrcanus:

> "Because a new king shall arise in Judah, and shall establish a new priesthood, after the fashion of the Gentiles (a variant reading here says "to all the Gentiles"), and his presence is beloved, as a prophet of the Most High, the seed of Abraham our Father." 8:14-15.

Josephus makes a similar reference to Hyrcanus:

> "He was the only man to unite in his person three of the highest privileges: the supreme command of the nation, the high priesthood and the gift of prophecy. For so closely was he in touch with the Deity, that he was never ignorant of the future."[3]

But the need for a faithful prophet of God was keenly felt. In some circles this prophet would be the bearer of salvation for Israel:

> "The twelve tribes shall be gathered there and all the Gentiles, until the Most High shall send forth His salvation in the visitation of the only begotten prophet." Test. Benjamin 9:2.

---

[1] It was said of Hillel, a contemporary of Jesus and a pillar of Pharisaism, "When the elders came to the house of Gadia in Jericho, a heavenly voice proclaimed to them: There is a man among you worthy of the Holy Spirit, but this generation is unfit for it. They fixed their eyes on Hillel, the elder." Tosephta Sotah 13:3.

[2] Legend tells of R. Jose ben Chalaphta who once heard in the ruins of Jerusalem a bat-qōl which cooed like a dove. Strack-Billerbeck I, pp. 124 and 127. See also John 3:22 for the appearance of a dove and the heavenly voice at the baptism of Jesus.

[3] Josephus, Jewish War I.2.8.

At Qumran, the sect leader was sometimes regarded as a prophet, but here too, there was great expectation of a future prophet who would come to restore righteousness and justice. He is mentioned only once in the Community Rule (IQS ix 11) ". . . until there shall come the prophet and Messiahs of Aaron and Israel."[1] The prophet was associated with Deut. 18:18-19 and the Messiahs with Num. 24:15-17 and Deut. 33:8-11. On occasion the leader was designated "teacher-prophet" since he was also concerned with the law. The function of the Interpreter of the Law and that of the Prophet merged together in their understanding of the work of the "Rightful Teacher".[2]

Just how intense this hope for a prophet from God was in Jesus' day can be seen by a reference from Josephus. Jewish Antiquities XX 8.6 tells of an Egyptian who claimed to be a prophet. He was able to get 30,000 people to follow him in an attack on Jerusalem, claiming that the walls would fall down at his command. But Felix heard of the plan and broke up the attack with great loss of life.[3]

Israel had become a land living in anticipation of a prophet who would speak authoritatively of God's will, and would by his presence assure them that God had forsaken his people no longer.

b) Jesus as Prophet

1) Opposition to the Prophet Imagery

How much one should use the prophet concept for Jesus is contested among scholars. Friedrich does not believe that Jesus calls himself a

---

[1] G.Vermes, Scrolls, p. 87; also Driver, Judean Scrolls, pp. 480-481.

[2] Driver, Judean Scrolls, p. 482; see also Fuller, Foundations of New Testament Christology (London: Lutterworth, 1965), p. 50-53 for appendix on Eschatological Prophet at Qumran.

[3] Josephus, Antiquities XX 8.6 (169-172); see Wars II 13.4-5 for another account of the same story. Also compare Acts 5:36 for a reference to similar prophetic uprisings.

prophet in the Nazareth story. He holds that Luke only makes a simile of the prophetic fate, and that there is no further application to Jesus.[1] Conzelmann, Cullmann, Franklin, Fuller and Hahn all see the terminology of prophet as being inadequate or irrelevant in light of the great function of Jesus.[2]

Franklin sees the earthly life of Jesus as a preliminary to the ascension, and although Jesus is the culmination of the Old Testament prophets, he is no different from them until his exaltation. He contends that Luke knew the whole range of prophetic traditions, but was not intending to show this as primary when he used prophetic terms to describe Jesus. Rather, he is showing him as a prophetic person whose ministry is bound up with the Old Testament prophets, who is one with them and who represents the climax of God's continuing activity.

This distinction is important for Franklin, and he returns to it often. Luke does not intend to present Jesus as a prophet, and he does not use "prophet of the end time" as a technical description for Jesus. He simply describes Jesus as a prophetic person who is linked to the old, but does not take its place. He observes that Luke is very free to use prophetic motifs for Jesus, but the other evangelists do not find the term suitable to explain all that Jesus said and did.[3]

---

[1] Friedrich, Προφήτης TDNT v.6, p. In an 88 page article, Lk 4:21 is not listed as having any prophetic context. The full article is by Krämer, Rendtorff, Meyer, and Friedrich.

[2] Conzelmann, Theology, p. 85; Cullmann, Christology, p. 30; Hahn, pp. 352-406; Franklin, pp. 67-69; Fuller, pp. 127-129.

[3] Franklin, pp. 67-68. His distinction is not convincing. He draws a number of prophet-connected similarities between Jesus and both Elijah and Moses, yet says while Jesus had all these similarities, he was not a prophet. If Luke presents Jesus as a prophetic person, and his ministry is given as the fulfilment of the earlier prophets (so Fuller, p. 69), it would seem proper to refer to Jesus as a prophet.

Kümmel notes that Jesus was called "prophet" by others, but that this does not mean that Jesus saw himself as "prophet". He cites Matt. 12:41 as proof that Jesus declared that he was not rightly understood by the term "prophet".[1]

Cullmann does not actually disagree with the presence of the prophet motif in Luke's picture of Jesus, but he sees the New Testament placing the center of faith in the exalted Jesus. He gives a summary of the advantages and the disadvantages of the concept of Jesus as prophet:[2]

The advantages:

1. It considers the unique and unrepeatable nature of the ministry of Jesus.

2. It takes full account of his human nature and covers well the earthly life and ministry of Jesus.

3. Jesus came preaching with prophetic authority and finality.

4. It combines well with the Christological titles of Messiah, Logos, Son of God, and Suffering Servant.[3]

5. It includes the concept of a second coming.[4]

The disadvantages:

1. The prophet motif emphasizes only one side of Christ's work (preaching). Jesus saw his ministry as including forgiveness of sins and an atoning death. The prophet suffers and dies because of his preaching. It is unavoidable, but it is not really his eschatological vocation. But

---

[1] Kümmel, Theology, p. 66.

[2] Cullmann, Christology, pp. 43-50.

[3] But Cullmann notes authoritative Jewish circles who expected the Messiah to play a political role, to fight and to conquer the enemies of Israel, making Jerusalem the center of government, a concept that contradicts Jesus' own reinterpretation of the messianic role, so all titles need to be seen in the context of Jesus' own use of them. Christology, p. 43.

[4] The similarity of the prophetic message from one prophet to the next gave rise to the belief that the same prophet returned over and over again. See Herod's confusion over Jesus and John the Baptist, Lk 9:7-9.

Jesus' own teaching was completely dependent upon his consciousness that he must suffer and die, therefore a description of Jesus must include the suffering servant role.

2. The prophet role does not cover the present and future work of Jesus. In Judaism, the Kingdom of God will come immediately after the prophet ends his preaching. It does not include an extension of his work.

3. The prophetic role does not cover the future, eschatological phase which the early church saw as the consummation of the work of Jesus. The prophetic role must end when the Kingdom of God begins. The prophet cannot complete the work for this is not his task.

4. The prophet motif has no connections with the pre-existent being of Christ.

Cullmann's conclusion is that the prophet model is too narrow to do justice to the early Christian faith in Jesus. He denies that the prophetic concept can be united with the Christological titles of honour which were given to Jesus, and states that it is fundamentally incompatible with the New Testament perspective of salvation.[1]

Cullmann's argument is in many ways representative of others who hold that the "prophet" title is inadequate to describe Jesus. Thus it is possible to respond to Cullmann and include the others in that response.

Cullmann's discussion, while helpful, does not deal adequately with all the Biblical materials. His conclusion that "prophet" is too narrow a concept and that it is fundamentally incompatible with the New Testament concept of salvation reflects the assumptions regarding salvation which Cullmann brings to the study.

1. Cullmann sees the ministry of Jesus as subservient to his death. Jesus knew that his purpose for coming was to die, therefore the image of

---

[1] Cullmann, Christology, p. 49.

the cross must fall across every aspect of Jesus' life, so that his teaching (prophetic) ministry is conditioned by his main purpose in coming to earth—namely, his own death. But, if one does not begin with that assumption, and allows the material to build its own case, another very real possibility exists. Jesus knew that the prophets of Jewish history had been killed (Lk 11:47-50); he knew that Jerusalem had a reputation as the center of Conservative Judaism, as the city that killed the prophets (Lk 13:34); he knew that the Jewish tradition believed that death was the fate of the prophet (Lk 11:49-51). He also knew of the religio-political tensions of the times (Lk 12:54-56; 21:37). These all point to the possibility that Jesus was fully aware of what the controlling powers did to people who spoke as he spoke, yet he continued doing what he had been sent to do. Later in his ministry, he was aware of the threats from the Pharisees, and the mounting tension in Jerusalem, so that he began to prepare the disciples for the inevitable possibility of his own death. Then, because of his faithfulness to his mission of proclaiming the presence of the Kingdom of God in jubilee terminology, calling for the people to adopt a new expression of life based on those jubilee principles, he was killed---just as he had expected. Therefore, Jesus did suffer and die because of the gospel he preached. His death was the predictable result of his life of prophetic preaching and teaching. He came to proclaim a prophetic message, knowing full well that such a proclamation would inevitably result in his own death.

2. Points 2 and 3 of Cullmann's argument can be put together in response. He argues that the Kingdom of God will come immediately after the prophet ends his preaching. Here Cullmann's difficulty is not with Jesus as much as it is with his own understanding of the Kingdom of God. Jesus does make a shift at this point, in that the Kingdom of God does come (4:21), but not in its totality, because it is still growing and expanding (13:18-21). Cullmann implies that the prophet will end his

preaching (die?) and then the Kingdom will come. Jesus alters this to provide an overlap with the coming of the Kingdom and his own ministry. Thus the Kingdom is here, but Jesus can continue to function as prophet of the Kingdom during his own lifetime because its presence is not yet complete. The difficulty is not the extension of the work of the prophet, (Cullmann says that this cannot be done), but it is with the difficult task of thinking of the Kingdom of God in a radically new way.

3. There is evidence in the scriptures and in tradition for prophetic pre-existence. (Cullmann says that "prophet" does not adequately deal with the pre-existence of Jesus.) Cullmann himself discusses this concept when he says that the message of the prophets was often so similar that people came to believe that the same prophet was re-incarnated and appeared as different men, preaching the same message. Both Lk 9:7-9 and v. 19 reflect this re-incarnation attitude. The Pseudo-Clementine writings, which Cullmann quotes, say:

> "the true prophet has appeared repeatedly since Adam, changing his name and form, until he comes at the end in the Son of Man."[1]

Cullmann uses this as evidence for a belief in the re-incarnation of one prophet many times over. If one works backwards, the belief in a re-incarnated prophet is quite capable of carrying a belief in the pre-existence of Jesus if he is also considered to be a prophet.

Minear is critical of Cullmann's "prophet" stance. He says that many theologians despise this title because it is less impressive than others. He then turns to Cullmann and says that he

> ". . . treats the prophetic role as an 'ordinary human professional category' which, because it lacks a recognition of Jesus' uniqueness, makes it irrelevant to the solution of 'the Christological problem'."[2]

---

[1] E. Hennecke, New Testament Apocrypha I, (London: SCM, 1973), pp. 161-162.

[2] P. Minear, p. 103.

Certainly Jesus stretched the prophet model, and it would be improper to say that everything about Jesus can be fitted neatly into the prophet title, but Cullmann's arguments are not convincing, thus it is necessary to move on in our examination of the prophet model.

2) Prophet as Title for Jesus

While "prophet" may not, in the eyes of some, be an adequate term for Jesus, it must be accepted that many of Jesus' own contemporaries regarded him in this way. In Lk 7:16 the people glorify God because "a great prophet has arisen among us". Simon the Pharisee makes this same assumption in a different way (Lk 7:39). In Lk 9:7-9 the people are calling Jesus "prophet" in sufficient numbers that Herod hears of it. When Jesus asked his disciples about his reputation, they tell him that people think he is John the Baptist, or Elijah, or one of the old prophets come back to life (Lk 9:19). The two on the road to Emmaus reflect this view that Jesus was a prophet (Lk 24:19).

Jesus almost certainly thought of himself as a prophet, for he was aware of his anointing and empowering by the Holy Spirit; his exorcisms and apprehensions of God's will were evidence of prophetic charisma; the hostility which he received at Nazareth; his own talk of having been sent (Lk 4:43; 9:48; 10:16); plus many of the symbolic acts which he undertook; all these were conscious things which placed him in the center of prophetic tradition. In addition to his proclamation of the Kingdom, both prophetic insight[1] and prophetic foresight[2] were attributed to Jesus. There is a clear sense in which Jesus the prophet was unique (because in his ministry alone the end time had come), and Jesus was conscious of that uniqueness.[3]

---

[1] Lk 5:22; 7:39; 9:47; 19:5; 21:1-4; 22:30.

[2] Lk 19:30; 22:18; Mk 10:39; 13:2; 14:30

[3] J.D.G. Dunn, Jesus and the Spirit (London: SCM, 1975), pp. 82-83.

Dodd believes that it is a good designation for Jesus and gives a series of reasons for calling Jesus "prophet". He sees personal traits and external traits, as well as the general content of Jesus' teaching as lending support for this title.[1]

Barrett explains the absence of prophetic self-designation by Jesus as being in full character with the other great prophets of the Old Testament, who did not refer to themselves as prophets either.[2] Marshall agrees with this silence, explaining that in materials normally assumed to be from "Q", there are no references to Jesus as prophet, with the possible exception of Lk 13:33. It is Marshall's conviction that this view of Jesus as prophet was taken over by the early church (Acts 3:23 and 7:31). Therefore it is quite right to interpret Lk 4:18 as a direct prophetic reference to Jesus.[3] Luke uses a prophetic text to open the ministry of Jesus, then intersperses the working of miracles throughout the gospel as a way of documenting the prophetic themes which were presented in 4:18-19. If we believe that Jesus actually did the things as Luke records them, then the combination of prophetic quotation with the working of miracles tells us a great deal about Luke's understanding of how Jesus saw what he was doing.[4]

This combination of prophet and miracle worker is also accepted by Vermes. He believes that the two concepts were either combined or were synonymous for Jesus and the twelve, so that Luke had very little

---

[1] C.H. Dodd, "Jesus as Teacher and Prophet", Mysterium Christi, Bell, ed. (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1930), pp. 56-65. In all, Dodd lists fifteen things: his authority, poetic form, pneumatic elements, predictive statements, symbolic acts, use of prophets, radical tone of his teachings, announcement of the Kingdom of God, repentance, etc.

[2] Barrett, Holy Spirit, p. 99.

[3] Marshall, Historian, p. 126. He says that Luke's source "L" has four references (7:16,39; 13:33?; 24:19). Barrett, Holy Spirit, p. 94 agrees with the comment on "Q", but does not list 13:33 as either "Q" or "L".

[4] Marshall, Historian, pp. 121-122.

difficulty uniting the two themes. The question is whether or not Luke saw Jesus as the final prophet. Vermes suggests that the problem of prophetic designation came about because of contact with the Pharisees. They saw prophecy as simply intellectual ability. The concept of prophet, however, was held so strongly by the contemporaries of Jesus that the question is not whether or not it existed, but how and under what circumstances it took on the strong eschatological twist which is presented by Luke in the Nazareth pericope. In his own ministry, Jesus absorbed into himself all the characteristics and expectations which applied to the prophets.[1]

Thus the expectation of a prophet who would come with a clear task to perform, and who would once again speak the will of God to the people was widespread in Judaism. Living prophets had faded, but the hope remained very much alive. There had been prophets before and at the end of time it would happen again. For the first century Jew, the return of the prophetic Spirit was inextricably tied to the Messianic time. No Jew could have used the term "prophet" as casually as does the modern scholar. From the evidence given in Luke, we have found no reason to question the concept of prophet being applied to Jesus. In this opening scene at Nazareth the supporting elements make it clear that Jesus is being presented as a prophet. The next issue for consideration is the role of the eschatological prophet, and to determine whether this prophet would be Elijah or Moses.

3) The Eschatological Prophet

Was Jesus to be seen as another prophet in the tradition of great Jewish prophets, acknowledging the long prophetic silence that had preceded him, or should he be seen as THE Eschatological Prophet? The

---

[1] Vermes, Jesus, p. 89.

initial answer is obvious, since it has already been shown that the next prophet was to be an eschatological figure. But the question of "which eschatological figure" is not quite so simple.

Two streams of tradition can be found (along with several smaller divergent spurs), one expecting Elijah and the other a prophet like Moses. The tension between these two main streams is seen in the early church. John the Baptist was sometimes regarded as the coming Elijah, but was not identified with Moses. Some of the activities of Jesus identified him with the Elijah typology, but he was more commonly seen as the new Moses. While Elijah typology was not generally identified with the Messiah, the prophet-like-Moses was seen in messianic terms as an eschatological deliverer. The task of the Messiah is very similar to that of the prophet like Moses. Luke expresses his own theology by means of this Isaiah quotation which identifies Jesus as the eschatological prophet. For in his mind, Luke saw Jesus not simply as a prophet, he was the final prophet, servant and Messiah. As further proof of Luke's vision of Jesus in this prophetic mold, Marshall points to the two signs of the prophetic ministry, namely mighty works and proclamation. The proclamation is documented by the ἐθαύμαζον of the people of Nazareth, and the mighty works are made very obvious in that same story precisely by their absence. (The dialogue in vv. 23-27 is placed there to explain their absence.) Marshall concludes that any distinction drawn between the deeds of the eschatological prophet and those of the Messiah is a false one. As eschatological prophet Jesus is the Messiah.[1]

Van Unnik supports this eschatological prophet motif. Isaiah 61 becomes a repetition and re-inforcement of the message of redemption for the people of God, since this had been a dominant theme for the eschatological prophet.[2]

---

[1] Marshall, Historian, p. 127.

[2] Van Unnik, p. 113.

But this still does not solve the question of what kind of eschatological prophet Jesus was, for the two streams were different. The Moses prophet is a redeemer who works miracles and gives a definitive exposition of the Torah (or even gives a new Torah). The Elijah prophet is a preacher who announces the imminent coming of the end, and urges repentance in preparation for it.[1]

a) The Eschatological Prophet -- Elijah

There are in the gospel of Luke a number of incidents which can easily be paralleled to the prophet Elijah. These parallels are studied by Dabeck, who comes to the conclusion that the Christ of Luke's gospel is the new Elijah who is the revealer of the Holy Spirit. He contrasts this with the gospel of Matthew, where he sees the Christ as being the new Moses, representing and revealing the Father.[2]

A series of possible allusions to Elijah are found by Young in the writings of the Intertestamental period. He cites I Macc. 2:55; The Martyrdom of Isaiah 2:4; I Enoch 89:52; II Baruch 77:24; IV Ezra 7:109. Young believes that the Elijah legend expanded not so much on the basis of his earthly works as from an effort to discover the meaning of his being taken up from the earth.[3]

The Jesus-Elijah comparisons are expanded by Wink, who adds to Dabeck's list, then analyzes their meaning. Wink says that for Luke, Elijah is the

---

[1] Fuller, p. 49.

[2] P. Dabeck, "Siehe, es erschienen Moses und Elias", Biblica 23 (1942) p. 189; Betz, p. 110 makes the following comparisons:

cleanse leper	Lk 5:12-14	= II Kings 5
raise dead	Lk 5:18-25	= I Kings 17:17-24; II Kgs 4:8-37; 13:21
give sight	Lk 7:21	= II Kings 6:17-20

[3] F.W. Young, "Jesus, The Prophet, a Re-examination", JBL 68 (1949) pp. 285-289. See also H. M. Teeple, "Mosaic Eschatological Prophet" JBL Monograph 10, (1957), pp. 3-9.

prophet par excellence, filled with the Holy Spirit, mighty in word and deed. But Wink feels that Luke develops a Jesus-Elijah comparison, not in order to present Jesus as an eschatological prophet, but in order to establish Jesus as a great prophet. In doing this, Luke does not develop an Elijah typology, but an Elijah midrash, based on the Book of Kings. Jesus is compared with Elijah because in no other prophet did the Holy Spirit work so powerfully.

Wink then concludes that the eschatological role of Elijah was rejected by Luke partly because it would be unfamiliar to the Gentiles, but mainly because Luke saw that history did not support it. The kingdom did not come, all things were not restored, and the fathers were not turned toward the sons (Lk 12:51-53, see Mal. 4:5). Wink sees this rejection of the eschatological Elijah motif as one step in Luke's own re-interpretation of eschatology and redemptive history.[1]

Lindars agrees with this rejection of the Elijah motif for Jesus and sees the early church shifting it over to John the Baptist. This was accomplished by coming to a decision about Jesus, and once that had been done, they worked backwards to find how John the Baptist could be made to fit into the scheme which had been built around Jesus.[2]

b) The Eschatological Prophet -- Moses

Some confusion always seemed to exist over the exact identity and imagery of the eschatological prophet. Increasingly, people looked for the return of a special prophet as described in Deut. 18:18-19:

> "I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brethren; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I

---

[1] Wink, pp. 42-45.

[2] Lindars, p. 206.

> command him. And whosoever will not give heed to my words which he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him."

Anderson believes that this "prophet like Moses" motif is of special importance for Luke. He sees both Luke 4:18 and 7:19-23 as describing the work of the Messiah in terms of the Eschatological Prophet like Moses and the Servant of Yahweh.[1]

But exactly how this Deut. 18 text should be understood was not always clear. Did it mean the return of Moses, or simply a successor to Moses who would come?

Usually it was interpreted to mean a successor to Moses, and some saw it referring to Joshua, since he had been appointed as Moses' successor. The Assumption of Moses identifies Joshua as the one "chosen by God" to be minister of the same covenant.[2] Others looked for Ezra since he was qualified to give the law as Moses had done. Ezra was responsible for the established text of the law, done by introducing Assyrian characters, thus he also became a "giver of the law". Jeremiah was also seen as a possibility. Both he and Moses prophesied for forty years, both prophesied concerning Israel and Judah, and both were attacked by members of their own tribe.[3]

But primarily, the comparison focused on Moses. Mánek sees the theme of a new Exodus being very important in Luke's gospel. This new Exodus is presented as the thing which Jesus and Moses have most clearly in common. Mánek uses the word ἐξάγω as the common tie. Moses was the leader of the Exodus, and Jesus is the leader of the new Exodus. Twice Luke says that Moses brought out (ἐξάγω) Israel from Egypt (7:36,40). Luke uses this

---

[1] Anderson, Origins, p. 256.

[2] Assumption of Moses 10:15. Charles, Pseudepigrapha, p. 412 says that Joshua was chosen apparently as the promised prophet in Dt. 18:15.

[3] Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 21b-22a.

same form ἐξήγαγεν to describe Jesus leading the disciples as far as Mt. Olivet (24:50) where he made his personal exodus. Thus he claims that Luke's theology (as well as that of the other synoptics) makes Moses a positive type of Jesus Christ.

He does not see the Elijah type to be in conflict with Moses, for Elijah was actually fighting to restore Mosaism. The forty day journey of Jesus to Mt. Olivet after the resurrection ties in with the forty day journey of Elijah to Mt. Horeb, as well as to the forty year travels of Israel to the promised land. Thus it is most appropriate for Elijah and Moses to meet with Jesus on the Mt. of Transfiguration as they help Jesus prepare for his own exodus.[1]

In his study on this theme, Teeple comes to quite different conclusions. He does not base the return of Moses on Deut. 18, but on the idea of his ascension without death. This comes from Elijah, who also ascended and was expected to return. Next came the belief that others (such as Enoch) would also return. Since Moses was the greatest prophet, the belief that he ascended like Elijah without dying led to the belief that he would also return again. First it was thought that he would return with Elijah, but then later, the belief that he would return instead of Elijah became more prominent.

Teeple concludes that there is no basis for the idea that Jesus saw himself as the Eschatological Prophet like Moses. The parallelisms between Jesus and Moses in the gospels are the result of coincidence and should not be seen as an attempt to imitate the career of Moses. Jesus saw

---

[1] J. Mánek, "The New Exodus in the Books of Luke", NovTest 2 (1958), pp. 20-22. Enoch is also seen as belonging on the Mt. of Transfiguration since "he was not, for God took him" (Gen. 5:24). He may have been unnecessary in telling the story since Moses and Elijah represent the law and the prophets. A pseudepigraphical link of Elijah and Enoch is found in Enoch 89:52 where Elijah is brought to heaven with Enoch. Mánek, p. 9.

himself as a non-Mosaic prophet, but since he was apocalyptic, he must have seen himself as the Eschatological Prophet.[1]

Gaston feels quite differently. He goes to considerable length to develop this prophet like Moses theme. As an advocate of Proto-Luke, he finds a combination of Mosaic Prophet and Davidic Messiah Christology already present there. Both are political and Proto-Luke sees the function of both to be that of Saviour of Israel. Whenever his followers attempted to use Elijah typology in referring to Jesus, Proto-Luke corrected it, so that Jesus consistently appears as Eschatological Prophet like Moses. This then developed into a two-stage Christology, with the first coming as Mosaic prophet and the second as prophet like Joshua and the Messiah.[2]

Salvation, Gaston says, is not a past achievement, nor only a future hope. It is something to which the risen Lord through the Holy Spirit is presently leading his people. By dying, Jesus fulfills the fate of the prophets (which Luke anticipates symbolically in 4:16ff), for their deaths, like his, were important as the inevitable conclusion of their lives. Jesus' death was the final proof that he was a prophet. It is only at the end of his life that Jesus can be firmly identified as Eschatological Prophet like Moses.

Gaston then identifies a number of similarities between Moses and Jesus. Both were workers of miracles; both were authoritative expositors of the Torah; both were, in common with other prophets, anointed for office by the Holy Spirit; both died a martyr's death; both were associated with covenant and with the wilderness for forty days; both were seen as divider and judge (although Luke records that Jesus rejected the role - 12:14); both were involved in appointing seventy others. In addition, the miracle

---

[1] Teeple, pp. 45 and 116-118.

[2] Gaston, pp. 290-294.

stories, especially the feeding of the multitudes in the isolated place (wilderness) with manna from heaven is a direct reflection of Mosaic typology.[1]

All this develops from the very beginning, where with programmatic intent, Luke shows Jesus to be the Eschatological Prophet like Moses who has been anointed to proclaim God's mercy and to do mighty works, but also to warn Israel that if they do not receive the gospel of mercy they will not benefit from the works which Jesus performs. The theme runs through the gospel to the end where the two on the road to Emmaus are called foolish because they had not understood what the prophets had said about the Messiah having to suffer and die. They had not seen the possibility of the Messiah following any form of the prophet motif. The pattern of suffering and exaltation in scripture is well known when it refers to Israel as a people, and it is thought to be especially applicable to the prophets, but it was never applied to the Messiah.[2]

Lindars sees the Eschatological Prophet like Moses theme being supported further by the wording in Lk 9:35. There **αὐτοῦ ἀκούετε** is inverted from Matthew and Mark (Mt. 17:5; Mk. 9:7) which have **ἀκούετε αὐτοῦ**. Lindars believes that Luke made the inversion in order to conform to Deut. 18:15 where **αὐτοῦ ἀκούσεσθε** appears in the LXX. He sees the reason for any hesitancy by early Christians to give total acceptance to the Eschatological Prophet like Moses motif coming from the connection of Moses with the Law. The Law was the center of the Judaistic controversy, so that

---

[1] Gaston, p. 287; Anderson, Origins, p. 257 makes many of these same comparisons, as does Manek, pp. 9-23. Marshall, p. 126 sees the eschatological prophet implications in the conversation between Jesus and the messengers from John (Lk 7:19). The deeds listed in 7:21-22 are not those of kingly messiah, but of a prophet who restores the paradise conditions of the wilderness period. See also Teeple, p. 48.

[2] Gaston, p. 293. This is seen as important proof of Jesus' redefining of terms and re-educating them in order to explain his eschatological prophet role.

the anti-Judaic polemic prevented the widespread acceptance of the Mosaic patterns among the very early believers.[1]

Although it did not develop, this concept did remain as a live possibility. The Pseudo-Clementine Preaching of Peter includes a reference to this Moses-Jesus relationship. Peter supposedly reports that:

> "The Jews often sent for us to talk with them about Jesus, in order to find out whether he was the prophet whom Moses had predicted would come." (Recogn. I,43)[2]

There are several other references which show that Moses and Jesus were seen in very close relationship:

> ". . . for neither Moses nor Jesus would have needed to come if of themselves men had been willing to perceive the way of discretion." (H-VIII 4:4).

> "Therefore Jesus is concealed from the Hebrews who have received Moses as their teacher and Moses is hidden from those who believe Jesus. For since through both one and the same teaching becomes known, God accepts those who believe in one of the." (H-VIII 6:1-2).

Then Peter adds that people will not be condemned because they don't know Jesus provided that they follow Moses and don't fight against Jesus.

> "if a man has been considered worthy to know both teachers as heralds of a single doctrine, then that man is counted rich in God." (H-VIII 7:5).

A caution against attaching any weight to these Pseudo-Clementine writings is expressed by Jeremias[3] and should be heeded. But their presence would at minimum tell us that the post-resurrection interpretation of Jesus had seen sufficient connection with the Eschatological Prophet like Moses tradition to have permitted it to continue alongside other forms.

---

[1] Lindars, p. 204.

[2] Hennecke, New Testament Apocrypha II (London: SCM, 1975), pp. 563-564. Recogn. I,43 is as cited in Cullmann, Christology, p. 17n.

[3] Jeremias, Μωυσῆς TDNT v.4, p. 862-863.

A very strong preference for Moses over Elijah is seen by Evans because Moses was mighty in word and deed, while Elijah was mighty in deed only. He left no book of instruction, thus he does not serve as a prototype for the giver of the new law. Evans further sees the central section of Luke's gospel as being a parallel to Deuteronomy and the teachings of Moses. He emphasizes the close similarities between Jesus' journey to Jerusalem and that of Moses to the Promised Land; the sending out of the twelve and the spies representing the twelve tribes; the appointment of the seventy missionaries and the elders appointed to share the work. He concludes by indicating that there is a strong Jesus-Moses connection being deliberately written into the gospel of Luke.[1]

This Mosaic typology is not limited to Christian writers. It held a prominent position in the synagogue traditions of Luke's own day. Meeks provides a summary of features from this tradition which were similar to the writings of Luke.

1. The term "prophet" was the most frequent designation for Moses at the time of Jesus. He is "the first prophet", "the source of prophecy", "the teacher of all other prophets".

2. Moses' prophetic career centered in Sinai where he received the living oracles. This ascent was widely regarded as "an ascent to heaven".

3. Coming down from Sinai, he came as God's apostle and was rejected, this being tantamount to Israel's rejection of God Himself.

4. Moses' prophetic role coalesced smoothly with all his other roles of lawgiver, shepherd, priest, advocate, servant.

5. Moses redeemed his people by leading them out of captivity. As this redeemer, his work had become a prototype of the coming deliverance.

6. The redemptive work of Moses had been signalled by signs and

---

[1] C.F. Evans, "The Central Section of Luke's Gospel", Studies in the Gospels, D. Nineham, ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1955), pp. 42-51.

wonders such as the feeding of Israel in the wilderness.

7. All later prophets maintained a direct link to Moses. Since Moses had been given the secrets of the ends of the ages, all later prophets remained dependent upon his message.

Thus when Luke asserted that God had indeed kept his promise to Moses by raising up a prophet like him, he tapped a huge reservoir of latent images which were expressive of Israel's strongest hopes and most vivid memories.[1] The portraits in Luke's gallery showing Jesus as prophet, revealer, teacher, servant, judge, ruler, Son of God, deliverer, and covenant-maker, have too many points of contact with the portrait of Moses to be coincidental. For Luke, no analogy to the redemptive work of Jesus could be more evocative or more far-reaching than this striking comparison to Moses.[2]

c) Conclusions

Luke 4:16-30 opens the public ministry of Jesus on a strong prophetic note. Jesus reads a text from one of the prophets; makes a prophetic claim to be anointed by the Spirit; issues a prophetic announcement about the coming of a new age; uses a prophet proverb; draws from the prophets for illustrative material; and finally is rejected, symbolizing prophetic fate. It seems clear that Luke has the prophet model in his mind as he presents Jesus in this story.

---

[1] W. Meeks, The Prophet-King, (Leiden: Brill, 1967), pp. 176-258. The eschatological prophet was also expected in the Samaritan community. See J. Macdonald, The Theology of the Samaritans (London: SCM, 1964), section 22 "Moses and Christ", pp. 420-446. He was identified as "ta'eb" and was clearly Moses redivivus, with prophetic features. He would perform miracles, restore the law, set up true worship and bring knowledge to all the nations. They carried the identification of the ta'eb with Moses even to the extent that he would die at the same age of 120 years. Macdonald, p. 368.

[2] Minear, p. 109. He claims that we have difficulty accepting this Moses analogy because the Old Testament is no longer our own story, and because we have not experienced this longing for a new age as deeply as did Luke and other first century persons. p. 121.

The announcement of the new age immediately thrusts Jesus into the eschatological prophet model, and this is a model which continues to be prominent in Luke. He seems to be quite content to use Eschatological Prophet like Moses terminology in placing Jesus within the total sweep of salvation history, and to describe the role of Jesus in God's continuing involvement with his people.

This description of Eschatological Prophet like Moses combines perfectly with the jubilee theme in this Lk 4:16-30 pericope. Moses proclaimed the jubilee legislation as Israel stood on the threshold of their new age in the promised land. At Nazareth Jesus announced that Israel is once again standing on the threshold of a new age, and he proclaimed that the jubilee principles are foundational for that new age. Thus the messenger (Moses-Jesus), the message (institution of jubilee--restoration of jubilee) and the event (new age in promised land--new age in time) all support the Eschatological Prophet like Moses designation for Jesus.

Our concern is primarily the evidence found in Lk 4:16-30, thus we will not repeat all the evidence found in the remainder of Luke's gospel which supports this basic Moses-Jesus identification. It suffices to say that we do not agree with Teeple when he says that the parallels between Jesus and Moses can be written off as coincidence, for we believe that they are far too numerous and at times far too obvious to be dismissed that easily. On the other hand, we are not fully convinced of all the details in Evans' attempt to structure Luke around Deuteronomy. Much of his evidence for similarity is valid, but we feel that his conclusions go one step beyond what his evidence will support. We do not believe that Cullmann fully grasps the intensity of the first century's expectations regarding the coming of the prophet. It is not a denial of the particular uniqueness of Jesus to use "Eschatological Prophet like Moses" as his title,

for it absorbs into itself all the functions which Jesus performed without denying the validity of other titles (Messiah, Servant, etc.) These are frequently re-interpreted by Jesus, so that indeed he was "more than a prophet", but the foundation is firmly laid in this opening story for Jesus to be understood as "Eschatological Prophet like Moses".

F. SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS

Our study of Lk 4:16-30 leads to the conclusion that the theme of jubilee is a primary theme for this incident, based on the following evidence:

The literal timing of this event is not possible because Luke has transferred it from its original setting. However, Luke's symbolic timing can be seen by noting that it is placed at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Preaching ministries calling for repentance (such as was done by John the Baptist) generally reached their height just before the beginning of the new Jewish year (late summer--early autumn).[1] By placing this event at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, Luke links it very closely with Jesus' baptism, and thus with John's ministry. Therefore, this event must have occurred near the beginning of the new Jewish year. This is further supported by the fact that a Consolation Sabbath reading appears almost immediately following the text which was actually read by Jesus, thus influencing Jesus' selection of this jubilee text. (We have also shown that there were other Isaiah texts which he could have chosen, so that we conclude that the selection of this text was influenced by the Consolation Sabbath text.) This timing is a fulfilment of Lev. 25:9 which indicates that jubilee is to be proclaimed in the seventh month (Tishri), which is in fact the beginning of the new Jewish year. We refer also to

---

[1] Wacholder, "Chronomessianism", p. 215.

Excursus A, where in the process of examining evidence for establishing the jubilee cycle, we were able to determine that the beginning of Jesus' ministry occurred in AD 26/27, which coincided with the sabbath year. This provides additional significance for the symbolic content of his proclamation at Nazareth.

2. The fact that Luke specifically identifies Nazareth as the place where Jesus was brought up (thus being his hometown) indicates that Luke has in mind the fulfilment of Lev. 25:10 which says that at jubilee, every person is to return to their family and to their property. Jesus is therefore acting in obedience with the Old Testament proclamation which he is about to make.

3. We have shown that the selection of the text from Isaiah 61 was a conscious choice by Jesus, providing a scriptural base for the jubilee proclamation. The terminology of the quotation has strong jubilee content, and our study of Intertestamental literature has shown that it maintained that identification with the jubilee year, so that the people who heard the proclamation at Nazareth knew that he was speaking of the jubilee. The conflation of Isa. 58:6 into 61:1-2 tells us that this was not an isolated use of these texts by Jesus. He had used them (and other jubilee texts) frequently, so that they had become associated with his ministry. It also substantiates the claim that Jesus used more than one text upon which to base his jubilee proclamation.

4. The announcement by Jesus that the scripture had been fulfilled today (4:21) refers both to the jubilee celebration which Jesus has just initiated, as well as to the new age which he says is to be characterised by jubilee living. The fact that this age was indeed here is documented throughout Jesus' ministry in Luke. He opened his ministry with a jubilee announcement, and his ministry was a demonstration of the jubilee principles.

He began by urging that in this new age jubilee (which had become merely a ritualistic observance of a past commandment) should be reinstated as an actual practice in obedience to the Law; his own ministry then demonstrated that obedience.

5. The challenge "physician, heal thyself" (4:23) shows that the people of Nazareth understood the jubilean implications of the proclamation, but that they misunderstood its application. They immediately reverted to their traditional understanding, and asked that the expected jubilee blessings be given to them as proof of the proclamation. Consistent with some of their other memories of involvement with God, they passed over the basic responsibilities of obedience, going directly to the blessings which God had promised (in response to their obedience).

6. The refusal to perform miracles (4:24) demonstrates the attempt by Jesus to correct their faulty understanding of jubilee. By refusing to do them, Jesus is saying that jubilee is not something which you passively receive while God does it all for you. Rather, he is telling them that jubilee is God's call for his people to correct the inequalities that have come up among them. Jubilee is the activity of the people in response to God' grace which they have already received.

7. The prophet illustrations (4:25-27) expand this understanding of jubilee by telling the people that jubilee is to be shared by Jew and Gentile alike, for God has always cared for all people. This has profound meaning for how one defines the people of God. Jesus rejects the family bloodline to Abraham basis and places the importance upon faithfulness and obedience.

8. The reaction of the congregation (4:28-30) shows that they fully understand the meaning of what Jesus had just said. Their anger over his interpretation of jubilee, added to their fury over his inclusion of the

Gentiles, led to a violent ending as they expelled him from the synagogue.

9. Underlying this entire event is an Eschatological Prophet like Moses Christology which further supports the jubilee content of the proclamation. Jesus stands as the new Moses of the final age, calling the people to return again to the jubilean expression of God's will as their foundation for life in the new age which he has just announced. Just as Moses proclaimed the jubilee legislation as Israel's guide for living in the promised land, so Jesus proclaims the jubilee legislation as being the foundational guide for living in the promised age which had just arrived in the person and ministry of his own being.

Thus the various elements of Luke 4:16-30 clearly support the presence of jubilee as the foundation for the Nazareth proclamation. We will now show how this theme serves to unite the entire story into one logical, cohesive presentation, giving explanations for the supposed shifts and contradictions which are seen by some writers.

Jesus came to Nazareth and was asked to read the Haphtarah for the synagogue worship that day. He selected Isa. 61:1-2, and after having read it, he proceeded to explain and to apply the text in the sermon which followed. The initial response of the congregation was a positive and somewhat surprised approval that one of their own young men should select such an appropriate text and then give such an interesting interpretation. The content of his sermon (τοῖς λόγοις τῆς χάριτος) moved the congregation in such a way that ἐθαύμαζον καὶ ἐμαρτύρουν.

But as Jesus continued with his sermon on jubilee, someone in the congregation called for evidence, asking him to prove the validity of what he was saying. If the jubilee had really come, then he should work a few miracles (heal the sick, give sight to the blind, etc.) since the jubilee was to be a time of special blessing from God. But when he gave a prophetic

interpretation to jubilee, refusing to work any miracles, he was clearly telling them that their own expectations were wrong. Jubilee does not mean sitting idly by while God provides abundant blessings for you.

As the crowd became aware of what this new interpretation of the year of jubilee meant for them, a negative reaction began to emerge. Then when Jesus also told them that in the sight of God, the Gentiles would share in the jubilee because they also are loved by God, this was more than they could bear. The two prophetic illustrations vividly communicated the frightening truth that they had lost their special status as priviledged children before God. They also carried the serious social and economic implications of telling the Jews that now their circle of caring had to expand to include the Gentiles whom they had always considered to be socially and spiritually inferior to themselves.

This treatment of the Holy Scriptures infuriated the congregation. Such terrible heresy demanded prompt action. They saw Jesus as a distinct threat to their spiritual integrity and to everything which they had been taught to believe. If his words were to be followed, their spiritual and economic future would be severely threatened. He had no right to interpret the scriptures to them in this way, or even to sit as a teacher in their synagogue, so they forcibly removed him. Jesus responded to their rejection by leaving Nazareth and going to Capernaum.

Thus the theme of jubilee provides the foundation for understanding this story in its entirety. It serves as the central theme which explains and unites each part of the story into one logical narrative.

CHAPTER IV

THE JUBILEE THEME IN THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Luke 4:16-30 has been shown to contain clear jubilee content both in the text which Jesus read and in the interpretation which he gave to that text. We have also shown that Luke gave this incident programmatic significance for his gospel. It is now our task to trace the use of this jubilee theme by Luke through his gospel, showing how the jubilee provides theological framework for understanding specific texts. This will be done by examining those texts where terminology is used which has been shown to have direct dependence upon jubilee terminology (often via Isa. 61:1-2); or where the theological concepts upon which the text is based have clear connection with the concepts of jubilee. The intent of this chapter will be to show that the Old Testament Jubilee goes far beyond the Nazareth incident, and does in fact, appear with sufficient frequency throughout the gospel of Luke to document the claim that jubilee was a critical theme in the message of Jesus.

A. THE MAGNIFICAT

Luke 1:46 - 55

This song-poem was most likely written by a Jewish poet wishing to express thanks to God for His help in the struggle against the enemy. The author of the John the Baptist narrative (whose work Luke used)

knew of the song and felt that it would be an appropriate expression for the situation, so he put it into the mouth of Mary. Originally, says Winter, the song was a psalm of thanksgiving to be sung after victory in battle.[1]

The song has an emphasis which reflects the spirit of Intertestamental theology. It looks to God to perform the deeds which are described in the song. God is the actor---the agent of change and deliverance for his people.

There are two sets of contrasting phrases which show the influence of jubilee upon this song:

v. 52 "he has put down the mighty
and exalted the lowly"

v. 53 "he has filled the hungry with good things
he has sent the rich away empty"

This reflects the jubilee theme of restitution where the rich have their

---

1P. Winter, "Magnificat and Benedictus -- Maccabean Psalms?" BJRL 37 (1954-55), pp. 341-344. We believe that Winter's argument has much to commend it, but there is controversy over these songs (1:46-55 and 1:67-79). Marshall, Luke, pp. 77-79 provides a summary of arguments for whether Mary or Elizabeth was the singer. Interpretations of the origin of these verses are: a) composed by Luke in Greek with no earlier history: A. Harnack, "Das Magnificat der Elisabeth nebst einigen Bemerkungen zu Luke 1 & 2", Studien des Neuen Testaments und der alten Kirche (Berlin: Reimer, 1931), pp. 62-85; H.F.D. Sparks, "Semitisms", pp. 129-138; N. Turner, "The Relation of Luke 1 & 2 to Hebraic Sources and to the rest of Luke-Acts", NTS 11 (1955-56), pp. 100-109. We reject this approach on the basis of Winter, p. 333 who shows that there is not a single phrase of thought which does not appear in older Hebrew poetry. b) Christian hymns composed by the early Jewish Christian community: D.R. Jones, "Background and Character of the Lukan Psalms", JTS 19 (1968), pp. 19-50. Jones also says that the two psalms, plus 2:29-32 came from the same tradition. His conclusion that only a Christian could have woven these expressions together is not convincing. Again we agree with Winter, p. 344, that if it were not for the messianic setting in Luke, they would not have been seen that way at all. c) Jewish hymns with Christian additions: E. Klostermann, pp. 379-380; S. Mowinckel, "Psalms and Wisdom" in Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East, Noth and Thomas, eds. VT Suppl. 3 (1956), pp. 205-224; Kümmel, Introduction, p. 96; Dunn, Unity, p. 132. We see this approach as being in basic agreement with Winter, and believe that it most adequately deals with the language and theology expressed in the material of the psalms. A comparison of these psalms with some of the Old Testament psalms of victory support Winter's claim that the origin was probably in the victory celebrations during the time of the Maccabees.

property taken from them and the hungry at last have food. The role reversal of the mighty and the lowly is further definition of this same theme. It is clear that the social and economic implications of jubilee had been kept alive in the hopes of the people. This was part of what God would do for them when he achieved victory over his enemies.

Marshall observes that this eschatological exaltation of the lowly was primarily an act for the future, but that it had already begun in Mary herself. Ταπείνωσιν describes Mary's humble state in the eyes of the world. Not only is the promise being restated, it is beginning to achieve its fulfilment in the event itself, as God elevated a lowly maiden to a holy task.[1]

Schürmann further supports the presence of the jubilee theme as he notes how the coming of the kingdom of God brings about a political and social revolution, bringing the ordinary life of mankind into line with the will of God which is described in this poem.[2]

B. THE SERMON ON THE PLAIN

Luke 6:20 - 26; 34 - 36

1. Luke 6:20 - 26 Blessed --- Woe

The close similarity with the jubilee theme as developed in Isa. 61:1-2 can be shown in convincing manner through a study of these verses.

a) The theme of good news to the poor (61:1) is picked up in v. 20, (μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοί)for it is the presence of the kingdom with its jubilee implications which is the Isaianic basis for their good fortune.

---

[1] Marshall, Luke, p. 84.

[2] Schürmann, Lukasevangelium I, p. 76.

b) The theme of having plenty to eat (Isa. 61:6-7) "you shall eat the wealth of nations . . . you shall have a double portion"[1] is picked up in v. 21 (μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες . . . ὅτι χορτασθήσεσθε).[2]

c) The theme of comfort to all who mourn (Isa. 61:2) is picked up in v. 21 (μακάριοι οἱ κλαίοντες . . . ὅτι γελάσετε), and again in v.23 where those who have suffered are exhorted χάρητε and σκιρτήσατε.[3]

d) Isa. 61:1 speaks of the brokenhearted. This theme is expanded as v. 22 speaks of different kinds of specific suffering and sadness: (μισήσωσιν ὑμᾶς . . . ἀφορίσωσιν ὑμᾶς . . . ὀνειδίσωσιν . . . ἐκβάλωσιν).[4]

These basic themes are then reversed and expressed a second time in the form of woes. The contrast is particularly obvious in vv. 25-26 where ἐμπεπλησμένοι vs πεινάσετε; γελῶντες vs πενθήσετε and κλαύσετε are used to describe this change in status.

2. Luke 6:34 - 36 On Lending

The jubilee theme of lending with a corresponding willingness to forgive the debt is included in these verses. Before showing this, however, it is necessary to note the textual problem contained in v. 35. The problem centres on μηδὲν ἀπελπίζοντες, "hoping for nothing in return", which is the UBS reading and is supported by A,B,D,K,L,P. An alternate

---

[1] These verses are not quoted in Lk 4:18-19. How much of the actual text was read that day is an unresolved question, but the presence of this theme in the full Isaiah text is obvious.

[2] M. Black, An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971), p. 157 says that the parallel text in Matt. 5 indicates that this hunger is spiritual. But he also says that Matthew's δικαιοσύνη is the vindication of the cause of the afflicted saints, the fulfilment of Isa. 61:3, so that he does see the thematic connection of this material.

[3] Dunn, Jesus, p. 55 says that the poor and those who weep/mourn describe a group identical to those envisaged by the prophet, and shows that Jesus firmly believed that this prophecy was being fulfilled in himself.

[4] These words have a more direct application to the first century scene of rejection in the synagogue (see Lohse, p. 163), but this does not diminish their importance as pointers to Isa. 61.

reading of μηδένα ἀπελπίζοντες "despairing of no one" is supported by ℵ, W,Ξ. Metzger explains the textual preference for μηδὲν ἀπελπίζοντες by saying that μηδένα ἀπελπίζοντες introduces an alien motive into the text, and that it appears to have come in the process of transcription, being the result of dittography.[1]

Ἀπελπίζω appears only here in the New Testament[2] and has the normal meaning of "to despair" or "to hope a thing will not happen", with an alternative meaning of "to hope to receive from".[3] Creed notes that the verb is not uncommon in later Greek, but that it consistently means "to despair". But, he goes on, to translate μηδένα ἀπελπίζοντες as "despairing of nobody" is out of harmony with the context which requires an antithesis to ἵνα ἀπολάβωσιν τὰ ἴσα. Trying to make it read "causing no one to despair" is a misunderstanding of the Syriac and is unacceptable.[4] Arndt and Gingrich say that "expecting nothing in return" is demanded because of the contrast with παρ' ὧν ἐλπίζετε λαβεῖν in v. 34. This is necessary even though it is contrary to contemporary usage.[5] Marshall agrees, adding that since Chrysostom, ἀπελπίζω has had the meaning of "to hope for some return", thus it should be used here despite its lack of early documentation.[6] Bultmann agrees that the original meaning was "not to believe or hope". He sees this Lk 6:35 usage as being related to the LXX usage "to give up hope" (Sir. 22:21; 27:21; II Macc. 9:18), and says that the only possible meaning is "lend without the expectation of receiving again", or if interest is involved "without expecting any return".[7]

---

[1] Metzger, p. 141.

[2] Smith, Greek-English, p. 30.

[3] LSJ, p. 168.

[4] Creed, Luke, p. 95.

[5] Arndt and Gingrich, p. 83.

[6] Marshall, Luke, p. 264.

[7] Bultmann, ἀπελπίζω TDNT v.2, p. 534.

We see further support for this reading by noting the Lev. 25 origin of the concept being considered. It is clear that the lending of money is to be based on need and on compassion for the brother, not on the opportunity for financial gain (Lev. 25:36,37). This exact same spirit is described here by Jesus, as he advocates the loaning of money without concern for repayment, considering only the need of the brother and the compassionate nature of God.[1] Thus the LXX reading "to give up hope" is fully appropriate for this setting. The person is to make the loan "without hope" -- i.e. having no ultimate concern for its repayment.

The thematic dependence of this situation upon Lev. 25:36 and Dt. 15:7-10 are clear. The thought content is the same: the poor are to be helped by the making of loans which are then cancelled by the coming of the sabbath/jubilee year. Jesus advocated a similar standard, but he encouraged the cancellation of the loan even before the sabbath/jubilee year arrived. The amount to be repaid (if any) therefore is left completely to the discretion of the poor and is based upon their ability to repay.[2]

In addition, the unusual use of δανείζω (which is used only here in 6:34,35 and in the parallel in Matt. 5:42)[3] in common structure with δίδωμι (6:30) shows a direct dependence upon Dt. 15:7-11 where the same δανείζω is linked with δίδωμι (v. 10 - διδοὺς δώσεις αὐτῷ καὶ δάνειον δανεισεῖς αὐτῷ). This combination of δανείζω with δίδωμι implies that

---

[1] Marshall, Luke, p. 264 leans this direction as he says that if the participle ἀπελπίζοντες is taken with ἀγαθοποιεῖτε , as well as with δανίζετε , the thought of lending with a view to gaining interest is ruled out. We believe that Marshall is right as far as he goes. We see in this the possibility that Jesus is including even the principle itself, not just interest, because charging interest was already being frowned upon.

[2] The poor are not to look upon these loans as free gifts. They are to be responsible in repaying as much of the loan as possible. Lk 12:57-59 stresses the importance of the poor making repayment of whatever they can before they are taken to court and jailed.

[3] Smith, Greek-English, indicates that δάνειον is used in Matt. 18:27 and δανειστής in Lk 7:41, p. 76-77.

both Lk 6:34-35 and Dt. 15:7-11 use δανείζω to mean a charitable loan which is interest free, and most probably not repaid as well.[1]

A further dependency link between Lk 6:34-36 and Dt. 15 is shown by noting that in each case the person who forgives the loan is assured the blessing of God. Lk 6:35 "and your reward will be great" reflects closely the content of Dt. 15:10 "the Lord your God will bless you in all your work". The blessing of God, plus the coming day of jubilee with its economic reversal are the basis in each of the texts for loaning (giving) to the poor with no thought of repayment.

While the usual treatment of these verses (both 20-26 and 34-36) focuses upon a spiritual interpretation of these words[2], there is some notice given to the more direct, literal interpretation. Dodd observes that this dichotomy of rich and poor (with the promise of reversal of economic conditions) is prominent in the third gospel, and that these blessings and woes announce this impending reversal of conditions.[3]

Kraybill considers this more literal interpretation of economic reversal to be crucial in understanding the basic themes of Jesus. He understands the kingdom of God to be a radical change in values for living so that the reversal of conditions is a positive, joyful expression of life.[4]

---

[1] This parallelism of δανείζω and δίδωμι is noted in the critical apparatus of Aland, Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum (Stuttgart: Wurttembergische Bibelanstalt, 1971), p 105. LSJ, p. 369 says that δανείζω normally means "loan with interest", but we believe the distinction is valid in this case. See. Ex. 22:25 where ἐκδανείζω is used to describe an interest-free loan to a poor brother.

[2] Marshall, Luke, "it is not those who are literally poor and needy, but those who are disciples of Jesus and hence occupy pitiable conditions in the eyes of the world", p. 246; "undoubtedly spiritual . . . a reversal of earthly position is not envisaged", p. 250. Ellis, Luke, "the elaborations . . . make explicit that a religious and not an economic status is in view". p. 114. Manson, Luke, "The hunger and tears are not . . . allusion to outward conditions. . . ", p. 65.

[3] Dodd, More New Testament Studies (Manchester: Manchester Univ., 1968), p 4.

[4] D. Kraybill, pp. 206-213.

In light of this jubilee spirit, we believe that these words must retain their basic (and literal) socio-economic meanings. Jesus proclaimed the jubilee (and indicated that obedience was to take place now). All socio-economic terminology has spiritual implications, but to focus on the spiritual to the detriment of the primary, literal meaning misses the impact of the very point which Jesus was making. When seen in the context of the jubilee message, these words of reversal take on obvious economic content.

C. JESUS ANSWERS JOHN THE BAPTIST

Luke 7:18 - 23

When Jesus is asked by John the Baptist to give evidence explaining the content of his ministry, Jesus responds by citing Isa. 61:1-2 once again.[1] It is significant that the six functions which Jesus mentions: (τυφλοὶ ἀναβλέπουσιν; χωλοὶ περιπατοῦσιν; λεπροὶ καθαρίζονται; κωφοὶ ἀκούουσιν; νεκροὶ ἐγείρονται; πτωχοὶ εὐαγγελίζονται) are all given in the present tense, indicating that these activities are a continuing ministry and thus accurately describe how Jesus perceived his own ministry.

---

[1] The historicity of this event is challenged by D.F. Strauss, The Life of Jesus Critically Examined (London: SCM, 1972), pp. 219-221. He says that it is very improbable that John could have sent messages while in prison, thus this is a fabricated event to show that John did recognize Jesus as the messiah before he died. Others see the pericope as being a composite story coming out of the continuing tension between the followers of John the Baptist and the early Christian community over the significance of Jesus. The story shows that John recognized Jesus (therefore the followers should recognize Jesus also). Fridrichson, Problem of Miracle in Primitive Christianity (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1972), pp. 97-98; Bultmann, History, pp. 23-24; Grundmann, Lukasevangelium, p. 163; Fuller, pp. 128-129. But Kümmel defends the essential historicity by arguing that ὁ ἐρχόμενος (the coming one) was not a customary designation of the early church for Jesus; that the story fails to give John's reaction to Jesus' answer; and that the answer which Jesus gives is quite similar in wording to other authentic Jesus sayings. Promise and Fulfilment (London: SCM, 1957), pp. 110-111. Dunn does not agree with Kümmel's arguments, but he also sees it as an historical event, saying that it took place when the note of imminence which was characteristic of John's preaching was supplanted by the fulfilment theme of Jesus' preaching. The followers of John wondered where the judgment was if the new age had come. Dunn concludes that the substance of the account must be historical. Jesus pp. 58-60.

Behind this list lies Isa. 29:18; 35:5; 42:7 and 61:1 (all of which have previously been identified as jubilee texts). This combination of Old Testament texts to describe the ministry of Jesus supports the jubilee character of that ministry. They indicate that the future era has indeed come (Lk 4:21), for the promised activities of that period are in fact occurring right now in the ministry of Jesus.[1] The structure of the sentence builds, until it finds its climax in πτωχοὶ εὐαγγελίζονται[2] stressing the fact that Jesus saw his ministry in terms of the jubilee content of Isa. 61, and that it was not simply a futuristic, spiritual theme, but that it had direct application for the poor in their present condition.

D. THE MISSION OF THE TWELVE

Luke 9:1 - 6

This text should be seen in close connection with Lk 7:22-23 where the ministry of Jesus is described in six phrases (five healing, one preaching). Here Luke does not repeat the list but summarizes with the simple instructions of Jesus to the disciples that they should "preach the kingdom of God, and heal" (v. 2). The use of εὐαγγελιζόμενοι (9:6) links this directly with Lk 7:22, and through it to Lk 4:18, then ultimately to Isa. 61:1-2. The significance of this text for our study is that here Jesus transfers the jubilee message and its corresponding activities to his disciples, instructing them to carry on the theme which he had begun. Thus jubilee moves beyond being simply a proclamation made by Jesus because of the particular timing of the beginning of his ministry[3] to become the

---

[1] Marshall, Luke, p. 292 notes the textual connections, but does not pursue the jubilee implications.

[2] Friedrich, εὐαγγελίζομαι TDNT v.2, p. 718; Jeremias, Theology, p. 109.

[3] The issue of dating Jesus' ministry is presented in Excursus A.

continuing theme of the gospel which is to be proclaimed throughout all the years. The jubilee content is stressed again in the final verse, where Luke indicates that the disciples did exactly as Jesus had instructed; they went out, preaching and healing (v. 6).

E. THE LORD'S PRAYER

Luke 11:1 - 4

The Lukan version of the Lord's prayer contains a phrase which has specific jubilary content. Verse 4 (which is the 4th phrase) says:

καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν
καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ ἀφίομεν παντὶ ὀφείλοντι ἡμῖν

The critical words for our study are ἁμαρτίας and ὀφείλόντι. The Matthean version of the prayer (Matt. 6:9-13) has ὀφειλήματα (debts) instead of the Lukan ἁμαρτίας (sins). Yoder says that the case for the financial meaning of ὀφείλω in Luke is strengthened by observing that in the Matthean version, an explanatory comment is added (6:14-15) either by Jesus himself, or by Matthew in writing it down, saying that here ὀφείλω has the more general meaning of sin, rather than its usual, more narrowly conceived financial interpretation of debt (as it has in Dt. 15:2).[1]

Fensham notes the parallel usage of ἀφήσεις and ὀφείλει (Dt. 15:2) with ἄφες - ὀφειλήματα and ἀφήκαμεν - ὀφειλέταις (Matt. 6:12).[2] We would add ἀφίομεν - ὀφείλοντι (Lk 11:4) to the comparison and would then

---

[1] Yoder, Politics, pp. 66-67. Hauck ὀφείλω TDNT v. 5, pp. 559-566 says that Luke nearly loses the concept of sin as debt. To sin is to come under obligation to God and hence to owe him restitution. Marshall, Luke p. 461 notes that debtors often become slaves to their creditors, but pursues the issue no further than that.

[2] F.C. Fensham, "The Legal Background of Matt. 6:12". NovTest 4 (1960), pp. 1-2. He sees a sabbath year background for the Matthean version. So does E. Lohmeyer, Das Vater-Unser (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1946), pp. 112-113.

conclude that the Deuteronomy-Matthew connection which Fensham sees also applies to Luke.

The root ὀφείλω with very few exceptions is used to describe financial indebtedness.[1] Black sees behind ὀφείλω the Aramaic hobha, meaning debt or sin, for sin was understood in terms of debt. He refers to the parable of the unforgiving debtor (Matt. 18:23-35) where hobha is also used.[2] Jeremias agrees that hobha lies behind the ἁμαρτία - ὀφειλήματα dilemma and suggests that this does in fact explain the problem. Luke does not include the explanatory phrases found in Matthew's version of the prayer because he is assuming the more narrow meaning of hobha as debt.[3]

This means that Matthew took the Aramaic hobha with its meaning of debt/sin and used the narrow word ὀφειλήματα which means quite particularly "debt". He then added vv. 14-15 with παραπτώματα thus suggesting a more general meaning for ὀφειλήματα , and in this way returns to the commonly understood meaning for hobha. Luke, having the jubilee concepts in his mind, intends to connect God's forgiveness of our sins (hobha - ἁμαρτίας) with our own forgiveness of debts (hobha - ὀφείλοντι). As we forgive in accordance with Dt. 15:2 and the jubilee, so also we are forgiven.

---

[1] LSJ, p. 1277. Arndt and Gingrich, p. 603 lists a peculiar rabbinic usage of ὀφείλω (to be obligated, or to commit sin) and cite Lk 11:4.

[2] Black, Aramaic, p. 140. Marshall, Luke, p. 460 says that the Matthew version is a more literal translation, but that ἁμαρτία is a correct rendering of the Aramaic hobha.

[3] J. Jeremias, The Lord's Prayer (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964), p.13.

F. EARTHLY POSSESSIONS AND HEAVENLY TREASURES

Luke 12:22 - 34

The fallow year was the only aspect of sabbath/jubilee regulations which was observed with any consistency; thus it is not surprising that Jesus referred to it only in a secondary manner.

The concern about anxiety speaks to the same situation which is addressed in Lev. 25:20-21, where the people worried about what they would eat if they obeyed the sabbath year regulations. In Leviticus they are instructed to be faithful and God would provide for them. Here (vv. 30-31) the solution is the same: your father knows what you need, your task is to be obedient, and the necessities of life will be provided.[1]

The jubilary content of this section is seen again in the following verses as Jesus tells the disciples to "sell . . . give" (v. 33). When placed in the context of the jubilean commandment, these words take on very specific meaning. They are not simply counsels of perfection, laying out an ideal, but unrealistic situation; nor are they to be seen as constitutional law for organizing a utopian state.[2] They are to be understood as instructions to the faithful (who are to engage in the redistribution of their wealth). In view of the kingdom's coming, they

---

[1] Marshall, Luke, p. 527 notes the connection with Lev. 25, but he goes a slightly different direction with his interpretation. People were finding their security in self-protection materially, while Jesus urges them to find it in God. An interpretative comment on this text is needed. These words are addressed to the disciples (symbolizing the followers of Jesus as a group). They are often individualized in modern interpretation, telling the solitary person that obedience will guarantee that he/she will never be hungry, etc. More precisely, Jesus is saying that faithfulness on the part of the people of God as a group will mean sharing together; thus all will be adequately provided for.

[2] Trocme, Nonviolent, pp. 48-49; Yoder, Politics, p. 76.

should practice the jubilee, and through doing this, they will experience the grace of God upon them. To practice compassion for the poor by selling and giving (Πωλήσατε . . . δότε ἐλεημοσύνην) is to be doing the will of God. In the end, it is the rich man who is truly in the precarious position, for if he refuses to put the jubilee into practice today, and does not redistribute his wealth, it will be too late tommorrow.

G. THE GREAT BANQUET

Luke 14:12 - 24

The setting for this story is the house of a Pharisee, where Jesus had been invited to eat. During the meal Jesus healed a man (1-6); told a parable (7-11); gave a teaching (12-15); and told a story (16-24). It is most likely that these events were assembled here by Luke around the theme of Jesus' criticism of the Pharisees.[1] We will, however, be paying particular attention to a secondary theme which illustrates the broad jubilee ministry of Jesus.

In the decision to heal the man with dropsy (1-6), Jesus makes a conscious choice to identify with one who was suffering, knowing that by so doing he would face conflict with the Pharisees who represented the law, wealth and power.

Then Jesus further illustrated the "high - low" contrast by telling the parable of the marriage feast and the places of honour (7-11). In this story the high are humbled by being asked to sit further down, and the lowly are exalted by being moved further up. Verse 11 summarizes the

---

[1] Ellis, Luke, p. 191.

point of the story in these words:

> "For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled,
> and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

This is a clear jubilee principle, for as the land is restored, debts are forgiven and slaves are set free, the lowly are indeed raised up and the high are brought down until they share a place of more nearly approximate equality.[1]

Then comes the more immediate setting for the story of the great banquet. As Jesus looked around the table, he saw the guests who had been invited (friends, brothers, kinsmen and rich neighbours) and he was critical. He noted that these people will invite you for a meal someday, and then everything will be equal (among people who were already equal before they began exchanging meals). He instructed them to invite people who could not possibly return the favour (the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind), thereby trusting God to invite them for a meal in return.

The importance of the jubilee sub-theme becomes even more prominent as Jesus moves from the actual event to the story of the great banquet. He has just said that if you invite the poor, the blind, etc., you should trust God to return the invitation, and now he describes the great banquet of God by telling the story of a man who gave a great feast. The direct connection of the setting with the story is seen in the identical listing of persons who are to be invited (v. 13 πτωχούς, ἀναπείρους, χωλούς, τυφλούς) and those who actually attend the banquet (v. 21 πτωχοὺς, ἀναπείρους, τυφλοὺς, χωλοὺς). The similarity of these lists with the persons mentioned in Lk 4:18 (πτωχός, τυφλός) is unmistakable. Marshall

---

[1] We use "more nearly approximate equality" intentionally. At the marriage feast the high and the low reverse places, while the goal of the jubilee is equality. But the jubilee does not bring total equality, it more accurately lowers the peaks and fills in the valleys (cf Lk 3:5) so that the disparity is not so great.

correctly notes that there is a meaning here which is very similar to that found in Lk 6:32-35, where Jesus gave the admonition to do good, expecting nothing in return.[1]

The story itself was a common story, probably originating in Egypt. Jesus often used these familiar stories, giving them a particular twist in application to fit his purpose.[2] According to Dodd, his purpose in this story is to include the Gentiles in the kingdom of God. The religious leaders reject Jesus, so salvation (symbolized by attendance at the feast) is offered to the Gentiles.[3]

Jeremias agrees that the theme is admission of the Gentiles, seeing it being given specifically in the second invitation (v. 23)[4] which is directed to those in the highways and hedges. He contends that this invitation (which is not found in either the Matthew or Gospel of Thomas versions) is an addition made by the early church to document their Gentile mission.[5]

Perrin agrees on most points with Jeremias, but he believes that the primary purpose of the story lies in the relationship of the guests to the host. The emphasis is not upon those guests who ultimately do come, but

---

[1]Marshall, Luke, p. 583.

[2]N. Perrin, Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus (London:SCM, 1967), p. 113; Jeremias, The Parables of Jesus (London: SCM, 1963), p. 200. Both say that the story is a parallel of the one found in Matt. 22. They note an additional version in the Gospel of Thomas 64, and believe that there is a similar story found in j. Sanh. 6.23c. They caution against putting too much emphasis upon any of the details. Jeremias, p. 178; Perrin, p. 112.

[3]C.H. Dodd, The Parables of the Kingdom (London: Nisbet, 1961), p. 120.

[4]Technically, Jeremias's second invitation is the third, with the first being the one given to the original guests.

[5]Jeremias, Parables, p. 69. He believes that Jesus would not have told the story in this way, but that it probably reflects accurately the spirit of Jesus.

upon the primary circle of those invited guests who made their excuses and did not come.[1]

Linnemann believes that the Pharisaic setting for the story indicates that it was told for the benefit of the Pharisees. They were not ready to see that the kingdom of God had come. The story itself tells them that the feast has begun (the kingdom is here, Lk 4:21) and those who do not accept that fact will have to live with the consequences. The key to the story is that "now is the accepted time".[2]

We agree with Jeremias that the story should not be allegorized too extensively, but we do not agree with most of the other things which he says regarding this story. It is clear that the imagery of the great feast is used to describe the inauguration of the kingdom of God.[3] The setting and content of the story leads to the conclusion that the Pharisees are being spoken to in this situation. The refusals were primarily excuses for being late. Verse 20 does not fit in either form or content with the other excuses and should be seen as a later addition.[4] We also note that the first two excuses (being original with the story) deal with the pull of material things (a field and five yoke of oxen). These material concerns had prevented them from participating in the feast. We note that it is exactly this concern with material things which is

---

[1]Perrin, p. 114. But Perrin goes into detail in identifying each of the groups who are invited with the various invitations. First are the Jews, second are the outcasts among the Jews, third are the Gentiles, p. 113.

[2]E. Linnemann, Parables of Jesus (London: SPCK, 1966), p. 91. She argues with Jeremias on almost every issue, seeing no connections with the Gospel of Thomas or with the j.Sanh. 6:23c background; the excuses are not refusals, only excuses for being late, with v. 20 (which is an outright refusal) being a later addition; the master of the parable, not Jesus, is speaking in v. 24, thus it belongs with the original parable, pp. 158-168.

[3]Ellis, Luke, p. 194. This has widespread acceptance among commentators.

[4]See Linnemann, p. 164 for additional discussion and reasons why she feels that v. 20 is a later addition.

dealt with in the jubilee themes, for jubilee specifically speaks to the issue of relinquishing your field for the sake of obedience to the kingdom of God. Thus a subtheme of the story says that those who are unwilling to express the jubilee by putting concern for material things into a secondary place in their lives will miss out on the salvation which Jesus is proclaiming.

The story also stresses the crucial nature of the present, as the feast has already begun and any delay will mean exclusion. Having announced this, Jesus goes on to use the story to redefine once again the membership of the kingdom which has come. This redefinition is a further extension of that which was done at Nazareth (Lk 4:25-27), where the Gentiles were included. Here the poor, the lame, the blind and the maimed are also included. Physical defects had direct religious significance. Those who were blemished physically were barred from full participation in worship,[1] yet here Jesus indicates that these will be the very people who will be included. Thus the jubilee themes of role reversal (the poor will be exalted, and be invited to the banquet; while the rich will be brought low, and not be invited), as well as concern for the oppressed is deeply involved in the telling of a story about how things will be in the kingdom of God.

H. THE DISHONEST STEWARD

Luke 16:1 - 9

The parable of the dishonest steward involves many problems and many different interpretations. What had the steward done? What was he hoping to accomplish by changing the accounts? Is v. 8 part of the parable, or is

---

[1] Lev. 21:17-23 specifically mentions (among others) the blind, the lame and the maimed.

it Luke's comment on the parable (this also raises the issue of whether the κύριος refers to the master in the parable or to Jesus)?[1]

Dodd says that the steward was a scoundrel, yet he had the sense to take a realistic and practical view of his critical situation. Dodd then gives two possible applications: Jesus may have been urging his hearers to think and to act boldly in their own time of crisis; or he may have been telling the parable in order to get at the Pharisees, who hoped to win a lot of favour with God by doing just a little almsgiving. He concludes that Luke himself did not know the point of the parable, thus it is open to several possible interpretations.[2]

Jeremias says that the parable itself ends with v. 7, that v. 8 is an insertion by Luke giving the application of Jesus (thus assuming that κύριος refers to Jesus); and that vv. 9-13 are later additions which give various possible interpretations to the parable.[3] The steward is a criminal who adopts unscrupulous measures in order to ensure his own future security. The point of the parable is to be aware of the very critical nature of the hour, so that persons will stake all they have on their future. The early church took this interpretation and changed it

---

[1] These and other questions are given thorough treatment by Bailey, Poet, pp. 86-110. Bailey's work has excellent insight and he is very thorough, but he treats the story as though it were a real life event, pushing every detail for meaning. He removes the element of humour, and treats each detail with such deadly seriousness that one wonders if he has forgotten that it is, first of all, a parable told to illustrate a specific point. Linnemann, Parables notes that this is a story and in true story-telling fashion some details are omitted, others are added, a soliloquy is created, etc. pp. 14-15.

[2] Dodd, Parables, p. 30

[3] This is basically the approach taken by W. Michaelis, Die Gleichnisse Jesu (Hamburg: Furche-Verlag, 1956), pp. 226-229; also Perrin, Rediscovering, p. 115. We do not agree. Jeremias argues that the master would certainly not have praised the steward for his actions, p. 45; but W.O.E. Oesterley, The Gospel Parables in the Light of their Jewish Background (New York: Macmillan, 1936) says that it is not at all incredible for the master to praise the servant for his prudence, p. 187.

so that it spoke to their own situation, teaching a proper use of wealth and a warning against unfaithfulness.[1]

Bailey says that the steward was a salaried agent who was fired. But since he was not jailed for his actions, he discovered his master's mercy and cast his lot upon that mercy. He makes the reductions and the population praises the master for his generosity. The master, seeing the joy of the people, cannot risk repudiating the action, and so he commends the steward for his skill in self-preservation. The parable provides unforgettable insights into the nature of God, man's predicament, and the grounds for salvation.[2]

Derrett says that the steward was a legal agent who could release debts and the master would be obligated to honour them. But the steward had been making loans with interest (which was illegal). When the steward cancelled portions of the debts, he cancelled that portion which covered the interest plus insurance. In his moment of crisis, the steward decided to obey the law of God by cancelling the interest. He hoped that his master would not be so ungracious as to challenge his authority to reduce the debts, but would prefer to take the credit himself for such action. Thus the master praised the steward, for he had made the master appear to be a generous and righteous man.[3]

Marshall basically follows Derrett, including v. 8 as part of the original parable and seeing the κύριος as being the master in the parable, rather than Jesus. The point is the proper use of God's wealth which had been entrusted to his disciples. The master commends the steward for his

---

[1] Jeremias, Parables, pp. 45-48 and 180-182.

[2] Bailey, p. 110.

[3] J.D.M. Derrett, "Parable of the Unjust Steward, Fresh Light on St. Luke 16" NTS 7 (1960-61), pp. 216-219.

actions in light of the urgency of the hour. Thus it is that all men should react to the impending judgment of God.[1]

Via is in general agreement with the Marshall-Derrett approach, but he gives a convincing discussion of how Jesus could tell a story which seems to glorify a scoundrel. He says that we should see this parable in the true comic relief that was experienced when Jesus first told it. The parable is in the form of picaresque comedy. A picaro is a pleasant rogue who lives outside the standard norms of society and succeeds in making these norms look very foolish. Yet, he is so lovable in his actions that no one is threatened by him. That the unjust steward was one of these picaros is seen by his business dealings; by his manipulation of his employer; by his distaste for physical work; and by his constant concern for his own well-being. Since the employer is described as being rich, sentiment would naturally lie with the lovable rogue steward. The advantage of picaresque comedy is that it frees the listener from making broad moral judgments while being led to consider a specific issue.[2]

We find the explanations of Marshall and Derrett giving much to commend themselves in understanding this parable. In their explanations, we find further evidence of jubilee background in this parable.

The steward was caught in his dishonesty, so he decided upon a course of action which would do the most to protect his own future. He called in the various debtors and forgave (cancelled) portions of the debts which were owed. In the face of his loss of position, status and economic security, he practiced the principle of jubilee debt release. (We are not concerned here with the morality of his motive, it is enough to note that he chose a jubilee tool in order to secure his own future.) The steward

---

[1] Marshall, Luke, pp. 619-620.

[2] D. Via, The Parables, (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), pp. 159-161.

is, by this action, preparing himself for that day when he will be equal with the poor. He stood to lose everything that he had anyway, he could lose no more (and could gain much more) by observing the jubilee debt release. This is precisely what the jubilee did. It involved a broad redistribution of wealth, so that the difference between the rich and the poor became much less significant. Jesus, by telling the parable, is advocating that people should redistribute their wealth now, before they lose complete control over it, for someday it will be lost to them anyway. Thus, they should use it wisely to win the approval of God. The steward is commended by his master for his actions in looking out for his own future. How much more will God commend those who are obedient even in the face of financial loss (which indeed the jubilee would mean to many wealthy people). The steward was going to lose his wealth anyway, so he restored it to the poor and in the process gained the approval of the master. It is to the distinct advantage of the rich to practice the jubilee, since they will be losing their wealth anyway. By practicing the jubilee, they will at least win the favour of God who will bless them for their faithful action. Yoder makes this point quite simply:

> "Practice the jubilee which I am announcing. By liberating others from their debts to you, you liberate yourself from the bonds which keep you from being ready for the kingdom of God."[1]

I. THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

Luke 16:19 - 31

The reversal of roles is a critical element of the jubilee. This principle is illustrated very decisively in the story of the rich man and Lazarus. The jubilean point of the story is that what matters to God is

---

[1] Yoder, Politics, p. 73.

the lot of the poor. To practice compassion (which would mean observing a form of perpetual jubilee) is to re-establish the poor, making certain that they have the basic necessities for decent living. This the rich man refused to do while alive. When death came to both Lazarus and the rich man, their conditions were reversed, and the rich man did not have even the foundational necessity of water for his tongue. The story points up the precarious position of the rich man who refused to practice the jubilee in his own lifetime.[1]

J. THE RICH RULER

Luke 18:18 - 30

The encounter of Jesus with the rich ruler must be placed within the structural context of Luke's gospel. Luke is dependent upon Mark for this material, but he changes the emphasis slightly in order to fit his own theological purposes. The parallel contrasts which he makes within these next four stories[2] demonstrate responses to the jubilee theme. The contrasting pattern is made even more striking when one notes that Luke departed from the Markan structure to add the story of Zaccheus at this critical point. One needs to determine why Luke made this addition. We will see, when dealing with Zaccheus, that Luke has used these three stories to lead up to the incident with Zaccheus, and that the Zaccheus encounter is a very fitting conclusion to these stories. It was not a

---

[1] The origin of the story is disputed. C.F. Evans, "Uncomfortable Words V, Luke 16:31", ExpT 81 (1969-70), pp. 228-231 sees it as a common folk tale taken over by Jesus. Drury, Tradition, sees Luke pulling together several divergent strands to create a story suitable to his own particular emphasis. p. 161. Grobel, "Whose Name was Neves" NTS 10 (1963-64) roots it in Egyptian storytelling, pp. 319-325. Jeremias, Parables, pp. 182-187 follows this Egyptian origin approach.

[2] rich ruler - 18:18-30; the disciples on the road to Jerusalem, 18:31-34; the blind man, 18:35-43; Zaccheus, 19:1-10.

casual insertion, but was used to stress the significance of this encounter with the rich ruler.

The ruler came to Jesus asking about eternal life. Jesus referred him to the ethical statements of the Mosaic law (v. 19). When the man replied that he had always kept the law, Jesus told him about the jubilee, and instructed him to observe it by observing the Mosaic regulations on the redistribution of property. Jesus urges the man to practice this redistribution with his own property. The ruler listened, was saddened, and went away.[1]

The usual answers for this story deal only with one's attitude toward riches[2] and do not give adequate seriousness to the literal approach of Jesus. When the man asked about eternal life, Jesus did not respond with attitudinal answers, he pointed to the law which was very specific. The answer which the man gave was also given in specific terms, he had obeyed the law. Therefore it is not justifiable to suddenly make the shift from obedience to attitude at this point in the story. Jesus was continually urging people to move beyond mere intellectual attitude to specific observance. In the same way, explanations which say that this was an individualistic problem for this person (because he was especially tied to his wealth), separate Jesus and the counsel which he gives from his own religious heritage in a way that is quite unnecessary. Jesus saw the commitment of the man to the Mosaic law, and he does not challenge that claim to obedience. In answering, Jesus told him of that aspect of the

---

[1] Technically, we are not told what the final decision was, but the fact that the ruler left sadly (v. 23); plus the commentary on riches which Jesus gives (vv. 24-25) forces upon us the conclusion that he must have rejected the counsel.

[2] M.O. Tolbert, Luke, BBC (London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1971) p. 144; Ellis, Luke, p. 219.

law which he had not been keeping, namely the jubilee regulations. As in other cases, the call to jubilee is linked with the promise of God's continuing care over those who are faithful. Jesus assures him that if he practices the jubilee, he will have exactly what he came asking for--- treasure in heaven.[1]

This is followed by two stories based on the theme of blindness (cf Lk 4:18) which are set in contrast with each other. Luke shortened the Markan account of the disciples' confusion (Mk 10:32-45 = Lk 18:31-34), but he was careful to emphasize their ignorance (blindness) by noting that "they understood none . . ."; "this saying was hid . . ."; "they did not grasp . . ."(v. 34). This is then followed immediately by the story of the blind man who did see, both literally and spiritually. This contrast of blindness and seeing (a form of rejection and acceptance) sets the stage for the addition of the story of Zaccheus by Luke.

K. ZACCHEUS
Luke 19:1 - 10

The public ministry of Jesus is nearing its end, and Jesus is approaching the city of Jerusalem. Luke's decision to use this incident to conclude the public ministry of Jesus is significant, for it tells the story of a person who took the message of Jesus quite literally. Jesus began his ministry with the proclamation of jubilee at Nazareth (4:16-30), and now Luke concludes that ministry with a specific example where that jubilee message is obeyed. The structural intent of Luke is clear: the message had been proclaimed, it had been heard, and some had chosen to follow. Lk 4:16-30 and Lk 19:1-10 provide very appropriate opening and

---

[1] Manson, Luke, p. 205 sees this as a new and higher demand which had already been imposed upon the twelve. We do not see this as a new demand, but rather as an old standard which had been ignored.

closing events for the Jesus-message which Luke is describing.

The key to the Zaccheus story is the restitution which he made after his meeting with Jesus. He announced a 50% restitution for the poor, plus a fourfold restitution in cases where fraud was involved.[1] Jesus responded to this announcement with positive support: "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham." At issue here is the question of what it was that made Zaccheus a son of Abraham. Was it his Jewish blood line?[2] Or was it the fact that he had just been faithful to the Mosaic law, having heard and obeyed the kingdom message, thus receiving its messianic salvation?[3] Marshall cites Lk 13:16 as proof that it means the former. We prefer to cite Lk 4:24-27 and 8:19-21 where emphasis is placed upon hearing the word of God and doing it. To base the salvation of Zaccheus upon his Jewishness rather than upon his obedience to the law (in this case the jubilee laws), is to contradict much of the ministry of Jesus which was critical of this concept of security through trusting in ancestry rather than in obedience.[4]

Zaccheus had heard the message of Jesus, and he took the jubilee teaching literally, applying it to his own situation. This action of jubilee restitution led Jesus to declare the salvation of Zaccheus. In this way the public ministry of Jesus ended with a successful example of same jubilee principles which were used by Luke to open the ministry.

---

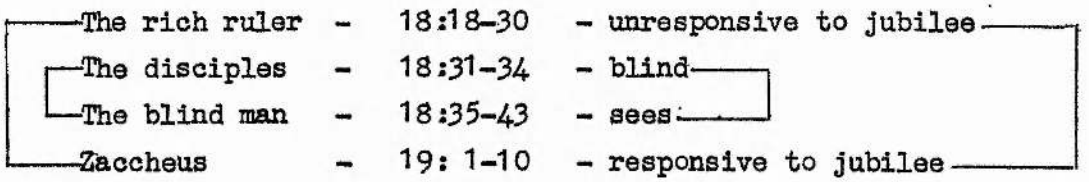
[1] The figures which Zaccheus used came from the Old Testament, but they do not coincide perfectly. In cases where money is improperly gained through robbery, oppression, or even loss of entrusted funds, Lev. 6:1-5 prescribes repayment plus 1/5. The fourfold restitution comes from Ex. 22:1-4 where four sheep are to be repaid for one that is stolen.

[2] O. Michel, "τελώνης" TDNT v. 8, p. 104; Jeremias, "ποιμήν" TDNT, v. 6, p. 500; Schweizer, "υἱός" TDNT v.8, p 365; Marshall, Luke, p. 698.

[3] Kraybill, pp. 130-132; Ellis, Luke, p. 121 calls him a spiritual son of Abraham because he shares his faith and works.

[4] This critical attitude was also expressed by John the Baptist in his preaching, Lk 3:8-9.

We turn now to the structural interrelationships of Lk 18:18 - 19:10. The double contrasts are shown as follows:



Luke has followed the basic Markan order, but the addition of the Zaccheus story gives special significance to the content of the preceding stories. They highlight the contrast of jubilee responses, making the rejection of the rich ruler to be even more striking as it is placed in contrast to the obedient response of Zaccheus. Once again Jesus finds faith where the traditional religious people did not believe it possible (Zaccheus), while being disappointed in a setting where faith was almost automatically assumed (the rich ruler). The two brief stories on blindness which are inserted into the middle serve to give additional emphasis to the faith question.

L. CONCLUSIONS

Our study of the gospel of Luke has shown that the theme of jubilee is not just a peripheral item in Luke's understanding of the teachings of Jesus. He saw it as a critical element, appearing in many different settings, and he used this theme with sufficient regularity to give it a place of importance in the theology of the gospel.

The theme is used by other people as they make prophetic statements about the coming Messiah (1:46-55). We have shown its importance to Luke as he rearranged his Markan material in order to bring it forward to a programmatic position in 4:16-30. The conclusion of the public ministry of Jesus with the story of Zaccheus further affirms this importance (19:1-10).

Luke saw in this theme sufficient importance so that he used it to envelop the ministry of Jesus, beginning with rejection of the jubilee announcement, but ending with a positive jubilee response.

In addition, it appears in the various summary statements made by Luke about the ministry of Jesus (6:20-26,34-36; 7:22-23; 9:2-6); it is included in the instructive material which was given to the disciples (11:1-4; 12:22-34; 16:1-9); it provides the foundation for specific stories told by Jesus (14:12-24; 16:19-31); and it forms an integral part of the answer which Jesus gave to those who wanted to know the way of salvation (18:18-30; 19:1-10).

Thus we believe that the theme of jubilee is a significant factor in the gospel of Luke. It is clear that Luke understood the importance of this theme in the preaching and healing ministry of Jesus, so he gave it a place of continued presence and prominence in the gospel. To understand the ministry of Jesus as reported by Luke, it is necessary to keep this theme in a central position.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

We have now completed our study of the development and occurrence of the jubilee theme in Luke. At each step of the study we have drawn preliminary conclusions. It is now our task to bring these conclusions together; showing the development and gradual transformation of the jubilee from its Leviticus origin to the Nazareth proclamation; proving its presence in the Luke 4:16-30 pericope; and demonstrating the continuing importance which Luke gave to this theme as he related his account of Jesus' ministry. Then, based on these conclusions, we shall comment briefly on some of the issues which are raised by these findings.

We have shown that the jubilee legislation is very old, having originated in its primitive form in the period just prior to the occupation of the promised land by Israel. The content of these early laws was heavily influenced by Israel's understanding of God; by their particular historical experience; and by the environment in which they found themselves. Standing on the threshold of a totally new experience, being convinced that God had led them out of Egypt to this land, Israel intended that these laws should be a guide for their new life together.[1]

But for the most part, these laws were not obeyed, so that by the time of the exile, they had little impact upon the life of the nation.

---

[1] See above, pp. 5-10.

As the exiles prepared to return to their homeland, there was a revival of religious interest. New laws were drawn up under priestly supervision, incorporating many of the older laws, while making certain changes in the hope that these changes would enable the new laws to win wider acceptance among the people. There were isolated instances where this revised jubilee legislation did come into consideration, but the most crucial element in the post-exilic period was the gradual transformation in the interpretation of the jubilee principles.

We have shown that there was a gradual movement from a literal expression of social and economic justice which the Jews observed among themselves in response to the redeeming grace of God, to a futuristic hope where the primary emphasis was upon receiving the expected liberation which was to be brought by the hand of God.[1]

In the Intertestamental period, with the hardships which were being inflicted upon the nation through foreign military occupation and the corresponding attempts at military self-liberation, this inner, futuristic interpretation became even more widely accepted. The people kept looking for that day when God would keep his word by delivering them, and restoring them to the control of their land by driving out their enemies. Within this general futuristic interpretation, some elements such as the fallow year and debt release were observed in a semi-regular fashion, although not on any national scale. Some of the more radical groups revived portions of the jubilee terminology and held symbolic celebrations, but the concept that remained most firmly embedded in their theology was that of a future liberation by the hand of God.[2]

---

[1] See pp. 55-77.

[2] See pp. 78-116.

From these findings we concluded that the jubilee terminology had not been lost, and that it was still recognized (although not obeyed) by the first century A.D. Jewish people. But we also concluded that the theology given to that terminology had undergone severe reorientation. It was expected that the jubilee would be an activity of God upon his people during the last days.[1]

It was into this kind of theological setting that Jesus came, proclaiming the jubilee as a paradigm for obedience in the kingdom of God. We have shown that the location of the Lk 4:16-30 pericope at this point in the gospel of Luke was a conscious attempt by Luke to give programmatic significance to the event. We believe that Luke had a special purpose in mind as he wrote his gospel, and that he felt it was quite appropriate to rearrange the basic structure of Mark in order to give prominence to this important theme.[2]

Excursus A gives a discussion of the dating of this Nazareth appearance.[3] Luke, for his own theological reasons, rearranged the material presented in 4:16-30 as we have already shown, thus the Nazareth incident did not actually begin the public ministry of Jesus, but occurred at some later time (probably within the first year of his ministry). We

---

[1] See above, pp. 116-117.

[2] See above, pp. 121-126.

[3] This material is placed as an excursus because, while helpful, it is not central to the study itself. The original intention was to prove the correlation of the jubilee year with the ministry of Jesus. In order to do this, it was necessary first to prove the sabbath year cycle, then work towards the jubilee year cycle. It is our judgment that proving the jubilee cycle is not possible, therefore the material was given excursus status.

The material constructs a chronology based upon the events as recorded in Luke. It is not intended to prove the historicity of that arrangement, nor to date in any definitive manner the Nazareth appearance. It is our judgment that although the Nazareth appearance may have occurred during the first year of Jesus' ministry, Luke's concern was to present the historical material in a rearranged "historico-theological" framework in order to emphasize the jubilee theme.

do, however, conclude from our study that the ministry of Jesus began in the year 26/27 AD; and from the conclusions derived through the construction of a sabbath year cycle, we are able to show that this same year (Tishri 26 AD to Elul 27 AD) was a sabbath year.[1] The fact that Jesus began his ministry during a sabbath year gives further support to the significance of the jubilee theme in understanding that ministry. While proving the sabbath year cycle, we concluded that it is not possible to prove the dating of the jubilee year cycle, since it had long ago fallen out of use, being retained only as a theological concept.[2]

Our study of the text which was read by Jesus led to the conclusion that the synagogue clerk selected the Isaiah scroll, expecting Jesus to find an appropriate passage which would complement the Torah text which had been read earlier in the service.[3] We also concluded that this was not an isolated use of Isa. 61:1-2, but that Jesus had made this a frequent text, along with other jubilee texts from Isaiah, thus explaining the textual assimilation of Isa. 58:6 into Isa. 61:1-2.[4]

The striking jubilary implications of the text were demonstrated by the use of εὐαγγελίζομαι, πτωχός, ἄφεσις, τυφλός, τεθραυσμένος, and δεκτός In the development of the Old Testament jubilee materials, we had shown how these words had retained their jubilary meaning, so that the people of Nazareth knew immediately what Jesus was talking about when he spoke from this text.[5]

---

[1] See above, p. 113.

[2] See above, pp. 115-116.

[3] See above, p. 158.

[4] See above, pp. 158-165.

[5] See above, pp. 166-187.

We have shown further that the jubilee theme does in fact play a more important role in the foundational theology of Luke than has normally been recognized. Beginning with the intentional placement of the Nazareth encounter at the beginning of the ministry of Jesus, to the final story of jubilary response on the part of Zaccheus, the jubilee theme provides a recurring base for interpreting various aspects of that ministry. The concept of preaching the good news (εὐαγγελίζομαι) which is established by Luke in the programmatic use of the Isaiah quotation is sustained throughout the gospel as having jubilary content. We found this theme to be a prominent factor in the various summary statements about the ministry of Jesus which were made by Luke (6:20-26, 34-36; 7:22-23; 9:2-6); it is included as part of the instructions which were given to the disciples (11:1-4; 12:22-34; 16:1-9); and he reports that Jesus used it to answer people who wanted to know the way of salvation (18:18-30; 19:1-10).[1]

It is therefore our conclusion that the theme of jubilee is indeed present in the Luke 4:16-30 sermon at Nazareth, and that in this sermon Jesus gave a significantly different interpretation to that theme from what was commonly accepted in his day. We also conclude that it was an important element in the ministry of Jesus, and that Luke comprehended the significance of this for both the work and teachings of Jesus, so that he used the jubilee as one of the foundational themes for his gospel. Thus to attempt to explain the ministry of Jesus without giving proper regard to the theological-ethical concepts of jubilee is to base one's understanding of Jesus on incomplete, if not improper grounds.

It is more difficult to take the next step of trying to determine exactly what Jesus had in mind as he made his Nazareth proclamation of

---

[1] See above, pp. 261-286.

jubilee. We see the historical Jesus through the perspective of both the resurrection and Pentecost (to say nothing of 2,000 years of religious conditioning); thus our interpretation of events from the life of Jesus is deeply affected by our knowledge of events at the end of his life. We impose upon the "preaching-at-Nazareth-Jesus" our theological assumptions based upon our "risen-from-the-dead-Jesus" convictions. In this way it is very easy to read into what Jesus said during his lifetime certain post-resurrection theological meanings that simply are not valid for a particular pre-crucifixion setting.

But as the result of our study, certain things can be said with confidence:

1. The identification of Jesus with the social, economic and religious backgrounds of Judaism is crucial for proper understanding of his ministry. Jesus should be seen in close continuity with Jewish faith rather than in any radical break with it. His proclamation of jubilee at Nazareth was not a new statement. In the synagogue service he used the prophet Isaiah as a foundation for reaching back into history, giving special emphasis to some long neglected concepts which (if applied) would have had immediate bearing upon the injustices of his day.

Our study has reaffirmed the importance of recognizing the prophetic stance of Jesus' ministry. Those who attempt to create distance between Jesus and the Jewish people of his day do him a great injustice. For example, the explanation that the controversy at Nazareth was caused by Jesus rejecting his audience (see Keck, Anderson and Flender) places on Jesus certain theological assumptions which come from a later period, and are not valid when applied to the original Nazareth setting.

2. The use which Jesus made of the jubilee theme must also be seen from within this close Jewish identification. As Israel stood on the

threshold of a new era, waiting to enter the promised land, Moses revealed the will of God to them in the form of jubilee laws. At Nazareth, Jesus announced the beginning of another new era, and proclaimed the will of God for his people by using similar jubilee terminology. In Leviticus, the demand for obedience was consistently grounded in the redemptive activity of God. The theme "I am the Lord your God . . . I brought you out of the land of Egypt" dominates the background of the jubilee laws. In Luke 4, the announcement that a new era has come (4:21) serves the same theological function, giving a foundation for an obedient jubilary response in the continuing redemptive activity of God.

That the jubilee proclamation in Lev. 25 is founded on the activity of God is readily seen, for Israel's very presence at this particular place (rather than being in Egypt) demonstrated that fact quite forcibly. In order to show a parallelism with the Luke 4 proclamation, one needs to provide similar evidence for the claim that a new era had in fact come. This is precisely the issue which confused the congregation at Nazareth. Jesus had announced the presence of a new era, but they could not see the signs of its presence. They had been so thoroughly conditioned to expect a very specific set of signs proving the presence of God's activity in the new age, that they could not identify the signs which were now available to them. So at Nazareth, they demanded proof according to their old expectations (4:23), thus showing that they did not understand the signs which Jesus had given. Even John the Baptist had had difficulty recognizing the signs of the new age. When he asked Jesus for proof (7:20), the answer which Jesus gave was simply to point to the jubilary deeds of his own ministry. Thus there was, in the mind of Jesus at least, ample visible evidence to support his claim that God's redemptive activity could be seen in the new age which he had just proclaimed.[1]

---

[1] Since the event belongs later in Jesus' ministry, there would have been plenty of opportunity for these signs to have been observed.

3. The primitive church community understood the jubilee theme as being sufficiently representative of the message of Jesus that the concept remained alive in the materials which were transmitted before the writing of the gospels. We note that the jubilee theme, while not as pronounced as in Luke, does occur in Matthew, Mark and John;[1] thus we conclude that the early church retained this theme as they transmitted the teachings of Jesus. It had maintained sufficient prominence throughout this period of oral transmission that Luke was able to understand its importance in providing a complete and accurate portrayal of the ministry of Jesus.

But just as it is improper to ignore the concept of jubilee when examining the ministry of Jesus, so it is also incorrect to assume that the total purpose of Jesus can be included in a basic proclamation of jubilee. Jesus used the jubilee as a paradigm showing the economic and social expression of God's will among his people in this new age. We could find no situation in the gospel of Luke which conflicted with the jubilee motifs, but to present Jesus as a "one issue prophet of economic reform" does not grasp the full scope of his ministry. There are many places in the gospels where, if one recognizes the jubilee content of Jesus' ministry, the application of that theme gives new and exciting dimensions to specific events; yet to look for the jubilee in every story, event or teaching is to distort a legitimate perspective of jubilee within the ethical teachings of Jesus.

When the theme of jubilee is properly understood as a paradigm for the social and economic life of the community of believers in the new age (which was announced by Jesus that day at Nazareth), certain observations about that socio-economic life can be made:

---

[1] Matt. 6:12,19-21, 25-34; 11:2-6; 18:23; 22:1-10; Mk. 10:17-31; 12:1-10,41-44; 14:3-9; John 12:1-8; 13:1-20. This brief listing is only representative, and is not intended to be exhaustive.

1. When Jesus proclaimed the year of jubilee in conjunction with his announcement of the presence of the kingdom of God, it is clear that he saw a direct connection between the jubilee and the kingdom of God. Thus we are forced to conclude that the principles of the jubilee are to be the foundational principles for life in the kingdom of God. The call by Jesus to jubilee living in the kingdom was based upon the activity of God (through Jesus) in proclaiming and in initiating the kingdom; just as the original call to jubilee living was based on the activity of God in liberating Israel from Egypt and in bringing them to that particular point and place in history. Just as Moses gave the jubilee legislation as God's will for his people in this new land, so Jesus used the principles of jubilee to describe the will of God for his people in this new kingdom. Thus, the principles of jubilee are indeed kingdom ethics. The exact details on how debts should be cancelled, slaves released, resources shared, etc., are not given in precise form. It is the responsibility of the people of God, being led by the Spirit, to wrestle with the specific methods for implementing the jubilee principles in each situation.

2. When Luke wrote his account of Jesus' ministry, he chose to include several situations where Jesus called for implementation of the jubilee principles. Throughout Luke's gospel, Jesus deals with very tangible things, so that for Zaccheus, an encounter with Jesus meant specific action which directly affected his economic life. Neither Jesus nor Zaccheus thought in terms of only attitudinal change which was separate from specific alteration of living patterns. To interpret jubilee as merely a material paradigm for spiritual truth (where forgiveness of debts means God's forgiveness of our sins; where release from slavery means release from the control of sin over our lives, etc.) is a severe distortion of the very thing which Jesus was deliberately emphasizing. The use of jubilee as a paradigm for life in the new age, plus Jesus' identification

of jubilee activity with salvation (Lk 19:9), leads us to the unavoidable conclusion that in this new age believing incorporates doing. To believe without doing is inconceivable, and the guidelines for doing are to be found in the principles of jubilee.

The jubilee is not simply a theological concept providing insight into the nature of God; it is a guide for living which is to be observed in normal daily practice among believers, providing an incarnational witness to the presence and will of God among his people.

These jubilee acts are not simply to be expected in the future, they are to be given concrete expression among the people of God in the present. When people were confused about exactly who Jesus was, he pointed to his own activity as documenting evidence for his claim (Lk 7:22). Indeed, may we not say that, in every age, the followers of Jesus should be able to point to similar jubilee evidence as documentation for their own identification? Jesus gave vivid daily expression to the message which he proclaimed. For the church to proclaim a message of hope that someday in the future God will intervene and then things will be different, without giving specific expression to that differentness in its own existence reflects a failure to come to terms with the heart of the Jesus message. Jesus' announcement of the presence of the kingdom of God in conjunction with the jubilee teaches us that what had been expected in the future can now be experienced in the present because we are now living in the new age, and that this new age is characterised by jubilee activity among the believers. Jubilee is not simply a description of what someday shall be; rather, because of the present emergence of the kingdom of God in Jesus' own ministry, it is the documentation of what now is, the foretaste of what shall someday be experienced in its completion.

At this point it is appropriate to stop and comment upon a recent

doctoral thesis, The Favorable Year of the Lord, by Robert Sloan.[1] Sloan's work is primarily a study of jubilary theology in Luke. He begins with a brief discussion of the basic jubilee legislation in Lev. 25, noting the cultic and social aspects of the jubilee laws:

> "The genius of the jubilee legislation . . . lies in the dynamic tension which it sustains between certain aspects of the cultic significance and its injunctions unto social justice. . . . It is in remembrance of and response to the creating, choosing and redeeming deeds of Jahweh that the jubilee is to be both cultically consecrated and socially celebrated."[2]

After a brief study of Lev. 25, Sloan identifies several "Eschatological Themes in the Jubilee Legislation" thus revealing very early in his study the direction in which he intends to go.[3] He justifies this rapid shift to an eschatological emphasis by saying that "mere reference" to Daniel, the Book of Jubilees, Qumran and Jewish Talmudic Literature

> "suffices to suggest . . . the common denominator (and hence the theological context) of all the various uses . . . made of the jubilee vision: i.e. an eschatological interest. What seems abundantly clear . . . is their overall tendency to give to the levitical vision of jubilee an increased eschatological flavor. . . ."[4]

Sloan is correct in his analysis of the Intertestamental literature, but when he says that it is not necessary "to trace the historical use and development of this theme throughout Jewish literature"[5] and then proceeds to jump from Lev. 25 to Luke 4 with only "mere reference" to all the

---

[1] R. Sloan, The Favorable Year of the Lord (Austin, TX: Schola Press, 1977). Sloan's work is a doctoral thesis presented to the University of Basel in 1977. It was very kindly made available to me by Prof. Bo Reicke of the Basel faculty.

[2] Sloan, pp. 13-14.

[3] Sloan, pp. 12-18. Included are: Social Emphasis; Restoration; Certain Cultic Features; Importance of Faith.

[4] Sloan, pp. 10-11

[5] Sloan, p. 10

intervening material, we believe that he makes an error from which he never fully recovers. By passing over this material, he fails to lay the foundation needed to observe the gradual shift in jubilee emphasis which occurred in the literature as the centuries passed. This means that Sloan is inadequately prepared to evaluate Jesus' use of the jubilee theme at Nazareth. He does not see any contrast in the way in which Jesus handled the jubilee materials and the standard first century interpretation of the theme. Thus he accepts the first century interpretation as being the normative interpretation, assuming that Jesus used this meaning for his own ministry. His difficulty is further compounded by limiting his study primarily to the Isaiah quotation in Lk 4:18-19 (which receives very excellent treatment). But he moves rather quickly through the Lukan setting for the encounter, thus failing to identify the particular emphasis which Jesus gave to the Isaiah quotation (and so also, the jubilee theme). He sees the movement from a positive to a negative response on the part of the people (vv. 22-28) as focusing on the person who is to bring in the eschatological age, and also upon the inclusion of the Gentiles.[1]

Sloan comes very close to seeing the jubilee as being the central theme for the Nazareth incident, but he consistently accepts the first century interpretation of jubilee as being normative for Jesus.

> "It must be concluded that Luke has purposefully employed the picture of jubilee---consistent with its historical application by Jewish legislators, prophets, apocalyptists and priestly sectarians--- as a metaphysical expression of the eschatological salvation of God."[2]

This is Sloan's fundamental error, for everything that he does with the jubilee theme reflects this acceptance of the first century understanding

---

[1] Sloan, pp. 85-86 and 87-88.

[2] Sloan, p. 163.

so that he has to struggle to show how the teachings of Jesus fit into this metaphysical, futuristic concept. From this point on, his conclusions are inevitable. He has the difficult task of trying to fit the jubilee into both the present age and the age to come; as well as deciding what (if anything) should be observed here in a literal way, and what should be interpreted "spiritually" with literal application awaiting the arrival of the future age.[1] He says that Luke is signalling "an existential, qualitative irruption into the present reality of a special age, a new era, indeed, a restored order of things."[2] But his application of jubilee to this new age is neither existential nor qualitative, for the principles of jubilee are transferred from a literal to a metaphorical interpretation and then, for the most part, moved off into the future. He acknowledges that "the jubilee legislation proclaims a special time at which all debts will be cancelled", but when making the transition to Jesus, this concept of forgiveness is applied not to human economic debts, but is made into "God's favorable acceptance of all man's debts to Him as paid in full."[3] Thus Sloan interprets the jubilee as something which God will do for his people, and in this way misses the distinctive jubilee emphasis which was given by Jesus at Nazareth.

---

[1] But even here he has the difficulty of being precise; thus he resorts to "ultimate" language, implying that the jubilee is observed here with only token symbolism in anticipation of its future reality. We cite: p. 190: "ultimately . . . the vitality of the cult and the establishment of social justice depend upon the gracious proclamatory activity of the Lord God of Israel."; p. 191: "when the genuinely poor shall ultimately receive . . . ."; p. 192: "it is yet in the eschatological future that the ultimate jubilee year of the Lord will be established."; p. 194: "the complete establishment of jubilary justice . . . awaits the parousia of Jesus from heaven." While we are in full agreement that perfection is attainable only in the parousia, we do not believe that Sloan intends that the jubilee is to be a valid option for the believer in the present age. He hints frequently at responsibility for present obedience, and he wrestles seriously with the issue (pp. 175-190), but since he has already accepted the jubilee as God's activity in the future, he is not able to present a logical case for serious jubilee activity by the people of God in the present age.

[2] Sloan, p. 34.

[3] Sloan, p. 35.

Sloan says that the application of the jubilee belongs to the eschatological age[1] and that this eschatological jubilary age of salvation has already begun through the words and deeds of Jesus[2], yet he consistently avoids making the application of literal jubilary activity in the present age.

> "The image of jubilee stands as a reminder of the church's present responsibility to expect and to proclaim to all the oppressed of God's children the coming day of social and economic reversal: i.e. the future dawning of the salvific age."[3]
>
> (underlining mine)

If the jubilee age has already begun (as Sloan says that it has, p. 47), then should not the principles of jubilee which were taught by Jesus be applied to this age and not projected off into the future world to come? We find Sloan's application of the jubilee principles to be inconsistent with his own interpretation of Lk 4:21.

In many respects, Sloan's work is deserving of high commendation.[4] It is unfortunate that he did not give more attention to the development of the theme prior to the time of Jesus, so that he would have better understood the distinctive approach which Jesus used in handling the jubilee theme in his own ministry. We believe that this, plus a more thorough examination of the full Nazareth setting for the Isaiah quotation, would have led to significantly different conclusions.

We believe that a proper understanding of the ministry and teachings of Jesus must give due consideration to the theme of jubilee. Just as it was in its original setting in Lev. 25; just as it was once again used by

---

[1] Sloan, p. 163.

[2] Sloan, p. 165.

[3] Sloan, p. 176.

[4] Sloan's work on Lk 4:18-19 (pp. 32-44); the Christological Implications of Jubilee (pp. 44-77); the Sermon on the Plain (pp. 121-139); and the Lord's Prayer (pp. 139-145) are of exceptional quality. We do wish, however, that he would have commented on additional jubilee texts in Luke. He mentions only 4:16-30; 6:20-38; and 11:1-4 in any detail, thus missing 9:2-6; 12:22-34; 16:1-9; 18:18-30 and 19:1-10.

Jesus in Luke 4 and throughout his ministry; so it should continue to be: 1) a response of God's people to God's activity on their behalf; 2) a present expression of a future hope; and 3) a literal demonstration of a spiritual experience.

The importance of these conclusions for Christian life today is clear. We fully recognize the differences between Jesus' day and our own day (just as Jesus was certainly aware of the differences between the time of Moses and his own time). However, we do not believe that these differences make the jubilee principles any less relevant for life. The necessity for creativity in application without slighting the literal spirit of jubilee is well stated by Kraybill:

> "Christian obedience today does not mean that we try to duplicate all the details of the jubilee. . . . The basic theological principles undergirding the jubilee, however, do provide a uniquely biblical view which can relevantly inform the Christian's economic philosophy. The biblical model of jubilee ought to be the economic norm within the corporate life of the church."[1]

In comparison with the time of Jesus, the difficulties involved in any response of jubilary obedience are multiplied in number and are far more intricate in our own time. But this does not deter us from our conviction that Jesus' message of jubilee can be applied to our own situations. We believe that it was an integral part of the ministry of Jesus, that he understood it as a fitting model to describe how the will of God could be lived out in practical, daily obedience by those who claim to be the children of God.

We believe that the jubilee concepts say to us that those things which oppress and dehumanize (poverty, hunger, slavery, loss of hope, etc.) should have no place among the people of God. Just as it was for the people

---

[1] Kraybill, p. 111.

of Jesus' day, jubilee is a message of hope and of freedom for us in our own time if we have the courage to make it a living reality.

The vision for jubilee living in the present age is urged upon us by Indian Church leader Metropolitan Gregorios:

> "The need today is to release a new vision which lies deep in the consciousness of ordinary people---- the vision of a life without greed, not overburdened with property, not so wedded to comfort so as to feel threatened at a slight fall in the standard of living. The Jubilee Year which Jesus announced in the synagogue at Nazareth may have much more in common with such a vision than with the planned and regimented just society of our current dreams. And in a world plagued by consumerism, resource depletion, pollution, proliferation, the armament race, and the impending ecological catastrophe, the vision of a Jubilee Year may release new forces in our consciousness which would lead to a saner path."[1]

At Nazareth, Jesus proclaimed the will of God for the people of God in this present age by using jubilee concepts. It is now the responsibility of the people of God in every generation to hear the proclamation of Jesus calling for a "new birth" which will give new life to all people, and to make the concepts of jubilee the basis for their socio-economic life together in the Kingdom of God.

---

[1] Metropolitan Paul Gregorios, "To Proclaim Liberation" in To Set at Liberty the Oppressed, RDN Dickinson, ed. (Geneva: WCC, 1975), 193.

EXCURSUS A

THE DATE OF THE APPEARANCE AT NAZARETH AND ITS COINCIDENCE WITH THE SABBATH YEAR CYCLE

We have shown that the jubilee had not been observed in any literal manner, having taken on a spiritual and eschatological interpretation. But the belief in the special importance of the sabbath year cycle (upon which the jubilee cycle was built) had not died. Wacholder believes that there is theological significance in the timing of this Nazareth event. He writes:

> "apparently at one time there was a widespread belief that the inevitable coming of the Messiah would take place during the season when Israel was celebrating the sabbatical year."[1]

He then raises the specific question

> "whether chronomessianic doctrine was a factor in the timing of the launching of certain movements, such as John the Baptist's ministry . . . ?"[2]

For our purposes we need only date the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus. But in order to develop a base for this date, and to show its consistency with other references to Jesus' life in the gospels

---

[1] Wacholder, "Chronomessianism", p. 201.

[2] Wacholder, "Chronomessianism", p. 201. Sabbatical messianism was a phenomenon leading to the search of scriptural prophecies for the exact date of the redeemer's coming.

we will examine briefly the date for his birth.

In undertaking this study, we recognize the intricacies of New Testament dating, and the scheme presented here does not claim to be the only possibility. Every New Testament event has several possible methods for calculating its date, with each method having both strong and weak points. One works, not so much with "absolutes" as with the concepts of "most satisfactory" or "least problematic". It is our intention to deal with the evidence for each event in developing a chronology which has internal integrity. This chronology will then be superimposed upon the Sabbath year cycle which has already been proven (see pp. 104-113) in order to determine whether or not there is special significance to be attached to the year in which Jesus began his public ministry.

A. THE BIRTH OF JESUS

1. The Death of Herod[1]

Luke 1:26 dates the birth of Jesus within months of the birth of John the Baptist. John's birth occurred "in the days of Herod, king of Judea". Herod died in 4 B.C.[2] This means that the latest possible

---

[1] E. Schürer, pp. 287-330; S. Perowne, The Life and Times of Herod the Great (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1956); S. Zeitlin, "Dates of the Birth and Crucifixion of Jesus" JQR 55 (1964), pp. 1-22; J. Finegan, Handbook of Biblical Chronology, (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1964) W.E. Filmer, "Chronology of the Reign of Herod the Great", JTS 17 (1966), pp. 283-298; T.D. Barnes, "The Date of Herod's Death", JTS 19 (1968), pp. 204-209; E. Lohse, pp. 36-43.

[2] Finegan, p. 231 says that it was between Mar. 12 and Apr. 11, 4 BC. Zeitlin, p. 1 says Adar 28 (29-30 Mar.) 4 BC. Schürer, p. 327 gives between Nisan 1-14 (15-30 Mar.). 4 BC is widely accepted, but not by everyone. Filmer argues for 1 BC, and Barnes argues for 5 BC. Derrett says that we are probably confused about which Herod this is, that it is probably Herod Archelaus. "Further Light on the Narratives of the Nativity", NovTest. 17 (1975), p. 83.

date for the birth of Jesus would be the Spring of 4 BC with the Winter of 5/4 BC being a more realistic time.

2. The Census Under Quirinius[1]

Luke 2:1-2 says that at the time of Jesus' birth, when Quirinius was governor of Syria, Augustus ordered a taxation census. While Tertullian and Justin Martyr each speak of census records,[2] these have never been found, so that we have no other extant record of this census. A second problem is that in the lists of Syrian governors, there is no space for Quirinius during the period when Herod was still on the throne.

Schürer set the direction for much of the scholarly discussion which followed as he presented five issues which supported his thesis that Luke's account was not historically accurate at this point. Schürer's issues were a refinement of similar issues raised earlier by Strauss in Das Leben Jesu.[3]

---

[1] L.R. Taylor, "Quirinius and the Census of Judaea", AJPhilol. 54, (1933) pp. 120-133; R. Syme, "Galatia and Pamphylia Under Augustus", Klio 27 (1934) pp. 122-148; T. Corbishley, "Quirinius and the Census: A Restudy of the Evidence", Klio 29 (1936), pp. 81-93; H. Braunert, "Der Römische Provinzialzensus und der Schätzungsbericht des Lukas-Evangeliums", Historia 6 (1957), pp. 192-214; H.U. Instinsky, Das Jahr der Geburt Christi, (Munich: Kösel, 1957), pp. 19-29; A.N. Sherwin-White, Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament (Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), pp. 162-171; Finegan, Handbook, pp. 234-238; E. Stauffer, Jesus and His Story (New York: Knopf, 1970), pp. 21-32; H.R. Moehring, "The Census in Luke as an Apologetic Device", NovTest Suppl. 33 (1972), pp. 144-160; Strauss, Life of Jesus, pp. 152-156; Schürer, pp. 399-427; Derrett, "Further Light", pp. 81-108; "Ursprunge", pp. 82-84; P. Benoit, "Quirinius", Supplement au Dictionaire de la Bible, Fasc 50b(1977) pp. 694-719. This supplement provides an extensive bibliography on this subject. D. Hayles, "The Roman Census and Jesus' Birth" Buried History 9 & 10 (1973 & 1974), pt. 1 pp. 113-132; pt. 2 pp. 16-31; Marshall, Luke pp. 97-104.

[2] Justin Martyr mentions "registers of taxing made under Cyrenius", Apol. I,34; and Tertullian speaks of census records "kept in the archives of Rome", Against Marcion IV,7 as cited in Finegan, p. 228. For discussion of Tertullian, see C.F. Evans, "Tertullian and the Lukan Census", JTS 24 n.s. (1973), pp. 24-39. He suggests that we cannot tell where Tertullian got his information, but it probably does not apply to the Luke 2:1 census.

[3] Schürer, pp. 407-420; Strauss, pp. 152-156.

1. History does not otherwise record a general imperial census in the time of Augustus.
2. Under a Roman census, Joseph would not have been obliged to travel to Bethlehem, and Mary would not have been required to accompany him.
3. A Roman census would not have been carried out in Palestine during the reign of Herod.
4. Josephus knows nothing of a Roman census in Palestine during the reign of Herod; he refers rather to the census of AD 6/7 as something new and unprecedented.
5. A census under Quirinius could not have taken place in the time of Herod, for Quirinius was never governor of Syria during Herod's lifetime.

Schürer concludes that Luke was working with uncertain historical data, and that he generalized by ascribing to Augustus as an imperial census what may have been only a minor provincial census. Because of his inaccurate source materials, he predated the census by ten years. The census referred to in Lk 2:1-2 is really the census of AD 6/7.[1]

Moehring basically follows Schürer, but applies an apologetic device to Luke's writing. He says that Luke was trying to show "the political innocence of Jesus in the eyes of Rome", and that this concern would have been jeopardized if any connections had been seen between Jesus and the Zealot movement which originated in reaction to the 6/7 AD census. Luke begins his story of Jesus by showing that Joseph "subjects himself and Mary to great hardship in order to fulfil his civic duty". Thus Joseph and his family were "true Jews who have never been involved in any rebellion against Rome or in any other subversive activity . . . ."[2]

---

[1] Schürer, pp. 426-427. P. Barnett, "ἀπογραφή and ἀπογράφεσθαι in Luke 2:1-5", ExpT 85 (1973-74), p. 379 claims that Galilee was not annexed until AD 44, thus the inhabitants of Nazareth would not go to Judah for taxation in AD 6/7. Thus Luke cannot be referring to the census of AD 6/7.

[2] Moehring, pp. 158-159. But if Luke were trying to create distance between Jesus and the Zealots, one is left with the problem of explaining the presence of Mary's song (1:46-55) and Zechariah's praise (1:68-79). Winter, pp. 328-330 argues that these were Maccabean battle songs and that Luke was fully aware of their political meaning (see above pp. 261-262). See also Yoder, Politics, pp. 26-30 who follows this same argument.

Stauffer argues at length with the Schürer position. He believes that Herod was under more rigid Roman control than is usually understood. He documents this by referring to restrictions on the money which Herod could mint (only copper, in comparison with Nabataean kings who could mint both copper and silver) and to the downgrading in rank which Herod suffered in 8 BC. But the heart of the Stauffer case rests upon his understanding of ἀπογραφὴ (registration) and ἀποτίμησις (assessment). Luke referred to the registration (Lk 2:1,2,3,5) and Josephus referred to the assessment (Ant. 18.1:1 and 18.2:1). The whole census was a major task, taking years to complete. It was not until Quirinius became governor of Syria in 6/7 AD that this census was finally concluded. This final stage of the census, which actually led to the levy of the tax itself, started the riots described in Acts.5:37.[1]

Stauffer explains the function of Quirinius by saying that Rome had created the post of "Generalissimo of the East", having full charge of the affairs in that part of the empire. Quirinius was the fourth in a series of men holding that post.[2] In this capacity he conducted the Homonadensian War, carried out other official Roman tasks, and certainly had the authority to supervise regional census activities.[3]

Thus Stauffer implies, but does not actually say, that Luke's only error was in not spelling out the detail that Quirinius only became the governor of Syria while the census was in process of being conducted. He

---

[1] Stauffer, Jesus, pp. 22-31. See also Marshall, Luke, who recognizes the speculative nature of certain elements of this argument, yet gives it a cautiously positive treatment, pp. 103-104.

[2] Pompeius Magnus, Mark Antony and Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa each held the post before Quirinius. Except for a brief period in 3-4 AD when Gaius Caesar held the post, Quirinius ruled in this capacity between 12 BC and 16 AD when Tiberius sent Germanicus to replace him.

[3] R. Syme also recognizes the existence of such a post having broad administrative responsibilities for Quirinius, pp. 134-135 and 148.

may have been involved in the original steps of the census through his post as "Generalissimo of the East", but it was only later that he became actual governor.

Strobel takes a position similar to that of Stauffer. He contends that Josephus (Ant. 18.1.1) mistakenly combined two different events, then dated the combination at 6 AD. He confused a report about a Quirinius census of around 5/4 BC with another special commission for Quirinius of about 6 AD in which Augustus had ordered that the administration should be set up to improve Roman control over Syria. Quirinius was charged with the task of "taking over the power of taxation" and of "disposing of the family estate" (held by Augustus in Syria).

Strobel connects the destruction of Sepphoris under Varus (who was legate of Syria from 6 BC until at least 4 BC)[1] with the rebellion of Judas Galileus (Acts 5:37) noting that Josephus does not record two different rebellions. Strobel believes that these two events belong with the beginning of the census which was initiated before the death of Herod. Then in 6 AD Quirinius, who had a reputation for good administration, was given the task of completing the census which had dragged on for nearly twelve years. Strobel acknowledges that this does not solve the problem of Luke's reference to Quirinius as governor (Lk 2:2) at a time when he could not have held that post (5/4 BC), but he insists that this does not impair the validity of his argument.[2]

A very different treatment of the census is found in Derrett. He says that the details of the nativity stories (census, wise men, etc.) do not come from the actual events of history, but from theological midrashic

---

[1] Sherwin-White, p. 166.

[2] Strobel, "Ursprunge", pp. 82-84.

concepts. He places primary importance upon the belief and intentions of Luke in what he was trying to communicate to his readers, rather than upon specific details of what may (or may not) have taken place. The coincidence of the Messianic birth and the census is based on midrashim of Micah 5:2-4 and Psalm 87:1-6.[1] The journey to Bethlehem is based on theological, quasi-political and economic considerations.[2] Thus the entire story should not be read as history in a literal sense, but as a theological portrayal of Old Testament themes.

With our present information, the Quirinius census does not provide conclusive proof for dating the birth of Jesus. Some element of error in placing the event at this time, or in the use of titles for Quirinius must be acknowledged. Whether the problem rests with Luke (Schürer) or with Josephus (Strobel) cannot be determined on the basis of existing evidence. For the present, we must simply recognize the problem and continue to look for additional evidence before using the Quirinius census to support or deny a specific date for the birth of Jesus.

3. The Star[3]

Matt. 2:1-2 tells of wise men coming to worship the King of the Jews. The reason they gave for coming was that they had seen "his star".

Stauffer explains the star as a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in

---

[1] Derrett, "Further Light", p. 85.

[2] Derrett, "Further Light", pp. 93-94. Derrett explains that city dwellers paid only 50% of the tax normally demanded of rural people. Joseph went to Bethlehem to get the tax benefit and to register the birth of his son, so that he also would be eligible.

[3] G. Mackinlay, The Magi: How They Recognized Christ's Star (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1907); Montefiore, "Josephus and the New Testament" NovTest. 4 (1960), pp. 139-160; Finegan, Handbook, pp. 238-259; Stauffer, Jesus, pp. 32-35.

the constellation Pisces, and dates this conjunction around 7 BC.[1] Finegan works from ancient oriental astronomical records and concludes that in 5 BC and then again in 4 BC a comet or nova appeared. Its appearance, along with the stellar conjunctions of 7/6 BC would have focused the attention of astronomers upon Palestine. He argues that the comet (Nova) of 5 BC would have started the Magi on their journey. They reached Jerusalem before Herod's death in the Spring of 4 BC. By that time the comet had reappeared (see Matt. 2:9,10). Using the stellar conjunction of 7/6 BC for a date, Herod decreed that all male children under two years of age should be killed.[2]

The "star" does have some historical evidence to support its existence. This, however, is dependent upon interpretation and is not by itself precise and conclusive. It does add to the acceptance of a possible winter of 5/4 BC date for the birth of Jesus.

Thus we conclude that the birth of Jesus took place very near the turn of the years 5/4 BC. This is derived from the cumulative support of the death of Herod and the "star". The census neither confirms nor denies this date. We shall see later that evidence regarding the ministry of Jesus also makes this 5/4 date quite acceptable.

Having arrived at this conclusion, we draw attention to the explanation given by Wacholder for the 2/1 BC date of birth used by early Christian writers from Clement to Eusebius. Wacholder believes that these writers did not actually know when Jesus was born. Influenced by Jewish chrono-messianic beliefs of the time, they chose 2/1 BC not for historical reasons,

---

[1] Stauffer, pp. 32-33. From this argument, Stauffer concludes that 7 BC was also the date of Jesus' birth. Montefiore follows the same argument as Stauffer.

[2] Finegan, p. 248.

but for theological (chronomessianic) reasons, since that was (by Wacholder's calculations) a shemittah year.[1]

B. THE PUBLIC MINISTRY OF JESUS

1. The 15th Year of Tiberius[2]

Lk 3:1 dates the appearance of John the Baptist as being in "the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar." What would seem to be a simple chronological date is in fact exceedingly difficult to ascertain. Finegan provides tables illustrating sixteen different ways of calculating this exact year.[3] The problem involves the determination of when to begin the reign of Tiberius. Augustus died in Aug. AD 14, and soon after that Tiberius was elected sole ruler. But two years before his death, Augustus had elevated Tiberius to the position of joint ruler with himself. This was done in Oct. AD 12. Thus, there are basically four possibilities for dating the beginning of the reign of Tiberius:

1. 23 Oct. 12 AD - Tiberius began to reign jointly with Augustus.
2. 1 Jan. 13 AD - The first full year of the joint reign.
3. 17 Sept. 14 AD - Tiberius is elected Caesar following the death of Augustus the previous month.
4. 1 Jan. 15 AD - The first full year of Tiberius' sole reign.

---

[1] Wacholder, "Chronomessianism", p. 215. Zeitlin adds that Jesus was born a Jew, and the Jews did not pay attention to birthdays. Birthday celebrations were a Roman custom. Only after his death did his birthdate become important. "Dates of Birth", p. 6.

[2] F. Hauck, Das Evangelium des Lukas (Tübingen: Mohr, 1934), pp. 37-38; G. Ogg, The Chronology of the Public Ministry of Jesus (Hertford: Epworth, 1940), pp. 170-201; G. Ogg, "The Age of Jesus When He Taught", NTS 5, (1958-59), pp. 291-298; Goudoever, Biblical Calendars, (Leiden: Brill, 1959); Finegan, Handbook, pp. 259-285; Strobel, "Ausrufung", pp. 38-50; Wacholder, "Chronomessianism", pp. 201-219; Strobel, "Ursprunge", pp. 84-92.

[3] Finegan, pp. 262-269, tables 116-131.

This is further complicated by the use of Julian, Jewish and Syro-Macedonian calendar years. The possible date for the beginning of the 15th year of Tiberius ranges from 1 Jan. 26 AD[1] to 29 Aug. 32 AD.[2]

Wacholder believes that John the Baptist planned his appearance in a season when preachers customarily called people to repent. The passover of 28 AD is the most suitable date for the appearance of John (according to Wacholder's chronomessianic point of view).[3] Wacholder had previously stated that all or part of the 15th year of Tiberius coincided with the sabbatical year which ran from 1 Tishri, 27 AD to 29 Elul, 28 AD.[4]

Ogg selects the date of 1 Nisan, 28 AD as the time for the beginning of the 15th year of Tiberius. This is based on his conviction that Luke gathered most of his information in Palestine, thus the calendar would have been a Jewish one, with a Spring year starting in Nisan.[5]

Finegan prefers the year 26/27 for the 15th year of Tiberius. He begins the reign of Tiberius with his elevation to joint ruler with Augustus. Finegan notes that with both the Julian and the Jewish calendar systems, most of the 15th year of Tiberius falls within 26 AD.[6] Within

---

[1] Joint rule with Augustus, counted as Julian calendar years according to the non-accession year system. Finegan, table 117, p. 262.

[2] Sole rule after succession to Augustus, counted as calendar years of the Egyptian calendar, according to the non-accession year system. Finegan, table 127, p. 267. In accession year dating, the portion of the year remaining from the date of beginning to rule is not counted. In the non-accession year method, this period (no matter how brief) is counted as a full year, and is numbered as the first year.

[3] Wacholder, "Chronomessianism", p. 215.

[4] Wacholder, "Chronomessianism", p. 214. But Wacholder, quoting Finegan, cites only the evidence which supports his chronomessianic assumptions. He ignores the conflicting evidence and does not mention Finegan's own conclusions which are quite different from his own.

[5] Ogg, Chronology, p. 200.

[6] Luke wrote to Gentiles, thus the Julian calendar would have been preferred. The story was Jewish, thus favouring the Jewish calendar. Both systems employ the non-accession year method. Finegan, Handbook, pp. 262-264.

these systems, Finegan prefers the Factual Regnal Years System, beginning with the joint rule of Tiberius and Augustus. This places the 15th year from Oct. AD 26 to Oct. AD 27. Using this base, he then dates the baptism of Jesus in Nov. AD 26 just prior to his 30th birthday. This allows a very literal interpretation of Lk 3:23: "Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about 30 years old."[1]

Strobel also begins the reign of Tiberius at the time of his joint rule with Augustus. He believes that the senile Augustus elevated Tiberius to the position of joint ruler in order to provide continuity for his own policies after his death. It would also mean that by having a co-ruler who continued on, there would be less likelihood of violent disruption among the enslaved provinces of the empire during the period of transition. Strobel also says that the careful shading of the terminology points to using the period of joint rule as the proper place to begin calculating the reign of Tiberius.[2]

We agree with Strobel and Finegan that the reign of Tiberius should be counted from the time of his elevation to joint rule with Augustus. The Caesars wanted to go down in history with reigns which were as long as possible. It is not likely that Tiberius would have ignored his two years of joint rule with the senile Augustus. We further believe that due to the setting and the content of the story, either the Julian or the Jewish calendar (non-accession year system) was most likely used by Luke, making the 15th year of Tiberius fall within the years of 26/27 AD.

2. About 30 years of age - Luke 3:23

The validity of this scheme can be tested briefly by several other

---

[1] Finegan, p. 269, see table 116, p. 262.

[2] Strobel, "Ursprunge", pp. 89-92.

references. Luke 3:23 has already received brief mention. If we accept the winter of 5/4 BC (see above, p. 311) as the date for Jesus' birth, and Sept. 26 AD as the date for the beginning of his ministry, then Jesus was in fact approaching his 30th birthday as Luke says.

3. Forty-six Years to Build this Temple - John 2:20

An incident is reported in Jn 2:20 from the first passover experience in Jerusalem which was attended by Jesus. In a discussion centered on the temple, the Jews remind Jesus that "it has taken 46 years to build this temple". Josephus tells us (Ant. XV.380) that Herod began to build the temple in the 18th year of his reign. This 18th year began in Nisan, 19 BC.[1] Adding the 46 years for construction, this gives the Spring of 27 AD for the time of the Passover recorded in John 2:13f. This agrees perfectly with the date of Sept., 26 AD for the beginning of the ministry of Jesus.[2] Even if the incident of the cleansing of the temple did not historically take place at the beginning of Jesus' ministry (as John's account implies), the figure of 46 years can still refer to the period of time which John believed to have elapsed between the commencing of the building of the temple and the beginning of the public ministry.

C. CONCLUSIONS

It is now possible to construct the following chronological scheme for the birth and the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus.[3]

---

[1] Schürer, p. 292; Jeremias, Jerusalem, p. 21; Finegan, p. 277.

[2] See Finegan, pp. 276-280 for discussion of problems in the terminology of Josephus, and for alternative ways of understanding οἰκοδομήθη, giving the possibility of 30 AD for this passover.

[3] Some of the dates within the 15th year are not specifically provable (baptism, 40 days in wilderness, Galilee ministry). They are given here only to show that there is sufficient time in this scheme for the full scope of John the Baptist's ministry, as well as the "pre-ministry" activity of Jesus.

5/4 BC: Birth of Jesus
26 AD: 15th year of the reign of Tiberius (Lk 3:1)
- John begins his ministry before Passover (Nisan)(Lk 3:3)
- Jesus is baptized (Sivan)(Lk 3:21)
- Jesus in wilderness for 40 days (Sivan to mid-Tammuz)(Lk 4:1f)
- Galilean ministry (Tammuz to Tishri)(Lk 4:14-15)
- Jesus comes to Nazareth on day of Atonement (Tishri)(Lk 4:16f)[1]
- Jesus' 30th birthday (Tebeth) (Lk 3:23)

27 AD: First Passover in Jerusalem (Nisan)(John 2:13ff)

When this chronology for the start of the public ministry of Jesus is placed alongside the cycle of sabbath years (see p. 113 above), a very important detail is immediately evident: The beginning of Jesus' public ministry coincides with the start of the 26/27 AD sabbath year. We believe that this was not accidental. It is possible to assume that Jesus totally ignored the Jewish religious calendar in determining when to begin his ministry, but we believe that this is quite unrealistic. Jesus had been thoroughly schooled in Jewish scriptures and thought, he knew of the eschatological significance which was attached to the sabbath year. He also knew that the jubilee cycle was based on the sabbath year cycle. The content of his ministry is thus supported by the timing of his ministry. We conclude therefore that Jesus was deliberate in his selection of this particular time in history to leave Nazareth and to begin to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. He used the coming of the sabbath year to give obvious significance to his message of jubilee living for the new age. We further believe that Luke recognized this union of message with event, leading him to transfer the Nazareth appearance from its literal historical location later in the ministry to this prominent opening setting, intending by this move to emphasize the importance of jubilee in understanding the full

---

[1] We include this event in the chronology because Luke puts it here in his gospel. As shown above (p. 126) we do not believe it actually occurred at this time. Luke placed it here because of its theological importance. He was willing to transfer it from its historical setting because it was such an excellent summary statement of Jesus' ministry.

breadth of Jesus' ministry. Thus the content of Jesus' message is given additional impact by associating it directly with the dawn of the sabbath year. That the content and the timing of the proclamation belong together and are thus mutually important in understanding the purpose of Jesus is supported by Luke's decision to place the Nazareth sermon at the beginning of the public ministry, drawing full dramatic impact from the event itself while establishing the jubilee content of that event as one of the key themes for his gospel.

EXCURSUS B

A RECONSTRUCTION OF LUKE 4: 16 - 30
An Examination of the work of H. Schürmann

H. Schürmann's "Zur Traditionsgeschichte der Nazareth-perikope Lk 4,16-30" provides a very detailed examination of the background for this text as presented by Luke. We have noted (pp. 144-145) the main points of Schürmann's argument, but they are worthy of closer examination and discussion. By means of this examination, we can compare Schürmann with others on this subject.

Schürmann's approach is to a) uncover the clearly recognizable expansion elements of the pericope; b) examine the question of possible Lukan origin for these expansion materials; and c) ask which is the expansion and which is the redaction.

a) What are the recognizable expansion elements? The Lukan account shows traces of a secondary expansion, especially in comparison with the variant form found in Mk 6:1-6.

1. According to Mk 6:2, the tension between Jesus and his audience is tied rather directly to the content of what Jesus said and what he had done. They were amazed (ἐξεπλήσσοντο) that one of their own had such gifts of oratory and power. The reference in Mk 6:2 must refer to something which Jesus said in the process of his teaching sermon. The Nazarene synagogue congregation took offence, expressed it, and Jesus responded.

In Mark the progression follows through in a normal sequence,[1] but in Luke this flow is lost. A scripture text is added, plus a phrase giving textual application which brings a supposedly favourable response. This is followed by a somewhat strained interchange between Jesus and the audience which reflects pre-Lukan elements that are not of his own doing. The result is that the people are offended. The cause of their anger is transferred from the content of the sermon (as in Mk), to the illustrations which Jesus used in the course of the dialogue. But in order to have this sudden change of disposition on the part of the congregation, the reaction of the Nazarenes must first be artificially challenged by Jesus. The more modest opposition found in Mark (which could be quite appropriate) is played up by Luke for his own theological reasons. But by doing this, he creates a stilted artificiality in the literary flow of the pericope. The scriptural text (vv. 17ff) and Jesus' self-revelation (v. 20f) are secondary insertions into the original text, which can be related to the key word of σοφία in Mk 6:2.[2]

2. The Lukan pericope has its twin climax in vv. 25-27 with its prospect of salvation for the Gentiles. This prospect is not a central one for the Nazareth scene.[3]

i) Luke introduces the contrast between Nazareth and Capernaum in v. 23, but in v. 25 the contrast is between Israel and the Gentile world. Luke appears to have taken the Markan πατρίδι (Mk 6:1 and 4)

---

[1] For examination of Mark's work on this passage, see E. Grässer, "Jesus in Nazareth, Notes on the Redaction and Theology of St. Mark, 6:1-6", NTS 16 (1969-70), pp. 1-23. This study appears in slightly different form in Jesus in Nazareth, BZNW 40 (1972), pp. 1-37.

[2] Schürmann, "Zur Traditionsgeschichte", p. 189.

[3] Schürmann, "Zur Traditionsgeschichte", p. 189. But Jeremias, Jesus' Promise, p. 46 argues that this is the central theme of this story.

where the word means "home town" and to have given it a double meaning of "home town" and "home land".[1]

ii) In v. 25, Luke uses ἐπ' ἀληθείας, his normal word in settings where Mark uses ἀμήν. The mixture of sources can be seen by comparing the εἶπεν δέ, Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν of v. 24 with the ἐπ' ἀληθείας δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν of v. 25.[2]

3. Luke adds the element of prophetic Christology. The inclusion of vv. 25ff (which are connected to the story by the saying in v. 24) fits this tradition only if the ministry and teachings of Jesus can be compared to those of Elijah and Elisha, and if Jesus should be killed as a false prophet as indicated in Dt. 13:1-12. There is, in addition, much evidence that the anointing referred to in the Isa. 61 statement was originally thought of as a prophetic anointing. Still further, εὐαγγελίσασθαι and κηρύξαι (vv. 18-19) underscore the prophetic function of proclamation.[3]

---

[1] Schürmann, "Zur Traditionsgeschichte", p. 189. Tannehill, p. 64 sees a common source for Lk 4:23 and Matt. 4:13. Both occur after temptations, and both fit the geographic sequence. Jesus' living in Capernaum (Matt. 4:13) follows reference to Nazareth. Masson, p. 48, has Luke changing Mark's "hometown" to "place where he was brought up" because of the birth narratives which made Bethlehem Jesus' hometown. Conzelmann, Luke, p. 37-38, agrees that the Nazareth-Capernaum shift is not essential. It only secondarily affects Gentiles, and more directly deals with providing a base to explain the Galilean origin of the disciples. Luke puts miracle above teaching, so that the Nazareth-Capernaum-call of disciples sequence becomes important. Luke begins with a sermon, but its theme is miracle, not teaching. When rejected, Jesus chose his disciples. Thus, the selection of disciples is directly linked with miracle, not teaching. Conzelmann's argument is far from convincing. It is difficult to see how he can read Lk 4:18-21 and not see "teaching" in both text and application. One also notes the general statement of widespread healing which precedes the Sermon on the Mount, in opposition to Conzelmann's statement that only after the sermon are any miracles recorded.

[2] Schürmann, "Zur Traditionsgeschichte", p. 190. Violet, p. 261, uses this same observation as proof that this does not come from Mark.

[3] Schürmann, "Zur Traditionsgeschichte", p. 190. See also Marshall, Historian, p. 122; M. Rese, Alttestamentliche Motiv, p. 149. M. de Jonge, "The Use of the Word "Anointed" in the Time of Jesus", NovTest. 8 (1964-65), pp. 132-148 shows that the expression stressed kingly anointing. F. Hahn, The Titles of Jesus in Christology, (London: Lutterworth, 1969), p. 395.

Schürmann believes that when this secondary expansion is removed, and when we recognize that Mark also had a secondary redaction to be removed, the relationship of Lk 4:16-30 and Mk 6:1-6 can be proven.[1]

b) Are these expansions Lukan in origin?

Next Schürmann addresses the question of whether the expansion which is found in vv. 17-21 and in vv. 25-27 is the work of Luke, or whether it reflects other sources. His conclusion is that it was not done by Luke's own hand. He cites the following evidence:[2]

1. The framework for v. 17 and vv. 20ff does not have the normal smoothness which one expects from Luke. When spread across the usual Lukan method, this framework has clear traces of pre-Lukan material. He identifies ἀτενίζω and σήμερον as being clearly the work of Luke, then presents the following evidence for a strong non-Lukan presence.

i) Βιβλίον appears to be a pre-Lukan linguistic usage, because Luke consistently refers to the Old Testament scriptures as βίβλοι. Behind βιβλίον one must presume an Aramaic siphar standing in construct relationship.[3]

ii) The referral to the various parts of the human body, i.e. eyes, ears and mouth (vv. 20-22) especially when used in this frequency is a criterion for judging this as Palestinian in origin.[4]

---

[1] Schürmann, "Zur Traditionsgeschichte", p. 191.

[2] Schürmann, "Zur Traditionsgeschichte", pp. 191-193.

[3] See also Violet, p. 260. But Schürmann's claim that Luke uses the plural in referring to the Old Testament scriptures does not stand up to a study of the texts. He cites Lk 3:4; 20:42; Acts 1:20; 7:42. In each case βιβλῷ, a singular dative is used.

[4] W.K. Hobart, Medical Language of St. Luke (London: Longmans, 1882), uses exactly this type of evidence as proof of Luke's own hand in composition, since he was a doctor. H.J. Cadbury, "The Style and Literary Method of Luke", Harvard Theological Studies, 1920, pp. 39-72 challenges the "Dr. Luke" identification, saying that Luke uses no more medical terminology than did many other writers of his day. But Marshall, Historian, p. 76; Ellis, Luke, pp. 40-41; Creed, Luke, p. xix; B. Reicke, The Gospel of Luke,

iii) The description of the synagogue service with its detailed notations (ἀνέστη, ἐπεδόθη αὐτῷ, ἀποδοὺς τῷ ὑπηρέτῃ ἐκάθισεν etc. is the work of someone having an intimate knowledge of the Palestinian synagogue service procedures.[1]

iv) The extended quotation from Isa. 61 is unusual for Luke, for we have no other instance where Luke himself inserts such a lengthy Biblical quotation into his gospel.[2]

v) The reference to the miracles of Jesus would certainly have been omitted if Luke himself had made the insertion of vv. 18ff. Jesus was pictured as one who proclaims the time of salvation to the poor, the hungry and the oppressed. To announce something, then have Jesus refuse to do it, is not characteristic of Luke.

vi) Luke understands the anointing (v. 18) in a Messianic sense, but the text of the pre-Lukan pericope thinks of a prophetic anointing. Verse 18 refers back to the baptism in Lk 3:21, which Luke (Acts 10:38) expressly describes as a Messianic anointing in light of Isa. 61:1. This Lukan understanding is further emphasized by Lk 3:23 which states that Jesus was thirty years of age when he began. The allusion to II Sam. 5:4 where the anointing of David also took place when he was thirty is obvious. This understanding of v. 18 as a prophetic anointing is foreign to Luke's

---

(Richmond: John Knox, 1964), pp. 23-24 all accept the terminology of physician, feeling no need to challenge it. But Conzelmann. "Luke's Place in the Development of Early Christianity", Studies in Luke-Acts, p. 310 says that the attempt to prove that Luke was a physician is past. We do not agree, seeing no need to question his basic medical background.

[1] Conzelmann assumes that this means Luke was not familiar with the Palestinian patterns, but Cadbury says that these services were standard in all synagogues, so that this knowledge of detail would be no problem to Luke.

[2] See also P. Stuhlmacher, Das Paulinische Evangelium (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968), p. 226; Anderson, "Horizons", p. 263, admits that Luke may have had a document before him which contained this quotation in this form, but feels it is more likely that he was quoting freely from the LXX. So also M-J Lagrange, Evangile selon Saint Luc (Paris: Gabalda, 1941), p. 138. Drury sees this as a major addition of Luke, coming from the LXX, p. 66.

understanding, yet since it stands in harmony with the context of the pericope, it is evidence of pre-Lukan material, for he himself would not have added the quotation, nor the surrounding verses.[1]

2. The twin proverbs of vv. 25-27 are also most likely not original with Luke.[2]

i) The non-Lukan idiomatic language structure suggests that Luke was not the first to form vv. 25-27. λιμός (feminine in the two other Lukan passages where the gender can be verified /Lk 15:14 and Acts 11:28/) is here masculine and hints back to II Kings 6:25. Also, the ἀμήν (changed to ἐπ' ἀληθείας) shows that Luke is working with already existing materials.[3]

ii) Luke has Jesus directing himself emphatically to Israel. Any mission to the Gentiles is mentioned only when it is already present in the source material. Any mission of Jesus himself to the Gentiles (as is hinted at in 4:23) is totally foreign to Luke.[4]

iii) The whole design of vv. 25-27 is so foreign to Luke that it must conform closely to an oral source out of the tradition. Later, in the same study, Schürmann questions whether even the insertion of these verses into the pericope is the work of Luke. He gives three reasons for his concern:[5]

a') Luke thinks differently about the salvation of the Gentiles. In the Lukan special source, the thought of the conversion of the Gentiles is rarely encountered. Whereas the universalistic tendency seen in vv.25-27

---

[1] Agreeing with Schürmann on this point is de la Potterie, "L'onction du Christ", Nouvelle Revue Theologique 80 (1955), p. 231-233 who also says that this is a Messianic anointing.

[2] Drury, p. 66 sees this as the second major addition from the LXX.

[3] Wellhausen, p. 10 says that this is evidence of an Aramaism. So does W.L. Knox, Sources of the Synoptic Gospels, v. 2 (Cambridge: University Press, 1957), pp. 47-50.

[4] Marshall, Historian, p. 104f accepts that Jesus confined his mission primarily to Jews, but sees in Luke a much broader ultimate scope for the ministry. So also Jeremias, Promise, p. 55.

[5] Schürmann, "Zur Traditionsgeschichte", p. 204.

is very characteristic of the oral tradition.[1]

b') It is especially characteristic for this layer of the tradition, that the threat of rejection of Israel would be common with the allusion to the salvation of the Gentiles.[2]

c') In Q, figures from the scripture (such as in vv. 25-27) are frequently hinted at so that it can be seriously considered that the expansion of the Nazareth pericope to include vv. 25-27 happened already in the Q tradition.[3]

c) What is the "core of the story"?

Next Schürmann attempts to prove that behind vv. 16,22,23-24,28-30 (his core element) there is visible the existence of a pericope which cannot be understood as a Lukan redaction of Mark. Therefore, Luke must have come upon an expanded pericope out of a non-Markan source.[4]

1. Verse 16 shows elementary Lukan style, but it also contains some very un-Lukan linguistic usages. ἐν τῇ ἡμέρα τῶν σαββάτων appears also in Acts 13:14 as well as in 16:13 and reflects Luke's preference for the plural form. But the following things are seen as non-Lukan:

i) Luke understands the difference between τρέφειν (τεθραμμένος) and ἀνατρέφειν. (This assumes that τεθραμμένος is the correct reading in v. 16.) He shows this by his use of forms of ἀνατεθράμμενος in Acts 7:20-21 and 22:3.[5]

---

[1] Lk 3:5,6,8,14; 7:1-10; 11:31; 13:28; 14:15-24.

[2] Lk 3:6,8; 7:1-10, 31-35; 10:13-15; 11:31; 13:28.

[3] 10:12; 11:29,31,50; 13:28; 17:26-28.

[4] Schürmann, "Zur Traditionsgeschichte", p. 204.

[5] Compare τρέφειν Lk 12:24, Acts 12:20; and ἀνατρέφειν Acts 7:20-21; 22:3. But LSJ do not support this distinction made by Schürmann. τρέφω (p. 1814) is given for "to bring up, to feed, to rear, as children in common use"; and ἀνατρέφω (p. 124) "to bring up, to cherish, to educate".

ii) Luke would hardly have written Ναζαρά on his own initiative, since on four previous occasions he had used Ναζαρέθ (1:26; 2:4,39,51). Ναζαρά is an Aramaic form of the name and appears elsewhere only in Matt. 4:13.

2. Verse 22 is without doubt edited a great deal by Luke, but it is hardly his own formation.

i) One has to postulate a different conclusion for Lk 4:16-30 if v. 22 is explained on the basis of a Lukan formation from Mk 6:2b-3. But Schürmann says that we have to view this in light of the noticeable parallel of v. 16 with Mk 6:1-2a.

ii) If Luke had used Mark, he would hardly have changed ἐξεπλήσσοντο (Mk 6:2) for his own more cumbersome ἐμαρτύρουν αὐτῷ καὶ ἐθαύμαζον thus creating the break with what follows in v. 22.

iii) The saying in v. 23 demands a preceding indication that Jesus is one of them. This is done quite adequately in v. 16, so that v. 22b has the literary function of introducing v. 23 and as such is not necessary.

iv) Luke did not get υἱὸς Ἰωσήφ from Mark. It may have an Aramaic origin. Mark's unusual designation of Jesus after his mother in Mk 6:3 may reflect a tradition about the virgin birth of Jesus.[1]

3. Verses 23-24 are not a reproduction of Mark.

i) V. 23b is almost a match of Mk 6:2b, but it lacks the demand

---

[1] A man is normally called after his faither. It is after his mother only when she is a widow or when the child is illegitimate. E. Grässer, "Jesus in Nazareth, Notes on the Redaction and Theology of St. Mark, Mk 6:1-6" NTS 16 (1969-70), p. 15 does not believe that Mark is making statements of dogma, for most likely Joseph, the accepted father, was dead. The subject of υἱὸς Ἰωσήφ was discussed above, pp. 202-204. One should note the textual problem in Mk 6:3. ὁ τέκτων ὁ υἱὸς τῆς Μαρίας (the carpenter, the son of Mary) has strong support and is used confidently by the UBS text. But p45 (3rd century) gives the variant reading τοῦ τέκτονος ὁ υἱὸς (the son of the carpenter).

for a sign as in Luke.[1]

ii) The insertion of Capernaum cannot be Lukan, because that town is first mentioned in 4:31.[2]

iii) Although v. 24 is a secondary editing and the interruption of a legitimate connection between v. 23 and v. 25 can be seen, the insertion is not modeled after Mark.

a') Luke retained the ἀμήν from a source other than Mark.[3]

b') The declaration in vv. 25-27 does not provide an original and proper basis for the rejection appearing in v. 23, which is probably alleged in the Lukan model as well as in the pre-Markan variant of Mk 6:4.

c') The relatives in Mk 6:4 are not casually passed by in Luke. Their addition was not included in the source which Luke had before him.[4]

iv) The saying in v. 23a gets its commentary in 23b, and on the basis of this half verse, the following things can be explained:

a') Already this introductory change of καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτούς is an indication of non-Lukan material.

b') Luke was not the first to insert 23a, because the change from παραβολή in the sense of a "saying" would be permitted in normal Palestinian linguistic usage.

c') It has been suggested that 23a comes from an insertion of

---

[1] Eltester, p. 142 sees a combination of Mark and the free rendering of other sources here. Whether Luke did it or whether it was already there is an open question. Tannehill, p. 55 sees three points of contrast with Mark: 1) πατρίς ; 2) the people talk about his miracles γίνομαι ; 3) the lack of mighty deeds in Nazareth θεραπεύω.

[2] However, if (as we have shown, pp. 121-125) this pericope was transferred forward to this location, the problem of the first mention of the city is eliminated. When the city is mentioned in 4:31, the style used in identifying the city (Capernaum, a city in Galilee) is typically Lukan introductory style, but this does not mean that it must be non-Lukan. Tannehill, p. 55 sees this as Lukan editing because this contrast is important for Luke's total objective. It is important enough that Luke postpones the call of the twelve in order to emphasize this contrast which is made by the location change.

[3] See O'Neill, pp. 1-9 for a discussion of this issue.

[4] In Mark, they refer to Gen. 12:1 (LXX) and are seen in 3:20 and 3:31-35.

the redaction which produced vv. 17-21, since the saying about the physician appears to be attached to ἀποστεῖλαι τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει in v. 18.

4. The conclusion of vv. 28-30 only remotely parallels the scandal and unbelief of Mk. 6. But if a variant of Mk 6 were visible behind the core story element, this could help lead to an appropriate conclusion.

i) A Semitic word order is to be suspected behind ἡ πόλις ᾠκοδόμητο in v. 29.[1]

ii) The intensification of the attempted murder can be connected with the introduction of vv. 25-27. But the threatened stoning conforms to the prophetic prediction of 4:24 and reflects Dt. 13:1-12. The ἐξέβαλον in v. 29 applies to the δεκτός in v. 24 and is pre-Lukan.

Schürmann's work is impressive and much of it is convincing. However, we were concerned with the number of times in which the details of his evidence simply would not stand up (the use of βιβλίον and τρέφω). In other places, his use of qualifying phrases made one wonder how sure he was himself of what he was saying. Also, some of the claims which he made were not backed by supporting evidence, thus one was forced to rely only on his own word for the truth of the statement.

In spite of these criticisms, we found the basic content of Schürmann's work to be convincing, and we basically accept his final conclusion that Luke had before him a source which Mark also had, plus Q and his own special sources L. One of his L sources had a strong Aramaic-Palestinian influence, and at times this does seem to shine through. But all the sources are submerged into Luke's own storytelling skills, so that although many strains are involved, the final formation of the story should be kept with Luke.

---

[1] Schlatter, p. 225, and Violet, p. 260 each support this Semitic order.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORKS CITED

Abrahams, I. Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924.

Aland, Kurt; Black, Matthew; Martini, Carlo; Metzger, Bruce; Wikgren, Allen. The Greek New Testament, 3rd ed. London: United Bible Societies, 1975.

_____. Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum, 7th ed. Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1971.

Alexander, John B. "A Babylonian Year of Jubilee". Journal of Biblical Literature 57 (1938): 75-80.

Alt, Albrecht, "Die Ursprünge des Israelitischen Rechts". in Berichte der Sächsischen Akademie 86/1, 1934.

Anderson, Hugh. "Broadening Horizons. The Rejection at Nazareth Pericope of Luke 4:16-30 in Light of Recent Critical Trends". Interpretation 18 (July 1964): 259-275.

_____. Jesus and Christian Origins. Oxford: Oxford University, 1964.

Arndt, William F., and Gingrich, F. Wilbur. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957.

Aune, David. "A Note on Jesus' Messianic Consciousness and 11Q Melchizedek". The Evangelical Quarterly 45 (1973): 161-165.

Bailey, Kenneth. Poet and Peasant, A Literary-Cultural Approach to the Parables in Luke. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976.

Bajard, J. "La Structure de la pericope de Nazareth en Luc 4:16-30". Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses 45 (1969): 165-171.

Bammel, E. "Πτωχός". Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. 6. G. Kittel, ed. Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968: 885-915.

Barnes, T.D. "The Date of Herod's Death". Journal of Theological Studies 19 (1968): 204-209.

Barnett, P. "ἀπογραφή and ἀπογράφεσθαι in Luke 2:1-5". Expository Times 85 (1973-1974): 377-380.

Baron, Sola Wittmayer. A Social and Religious History of the Jews. New York: Columbia University Press, 1952.

Barrett, C. Kingsley. The Holy Spirit and Gospel Tradition. Edinburgh: SPCK, 1947.

_____. Luke the Historian in Recent Study. London: Epworth, 1962.

Batey, Richard. Jesus and the Poor. New York: Harper and Row, 1972.

Batten, Loring W. The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, The International Critical Commentary. Edited by S.R. Driver, A. Plummer, C.A. Briggs. Edinburgh: Clark, 1913.

Baumgärtel, F. "Πνεῦμα". Theological Dictionary of the New Testament vol. 6. G. Kittel, ed., Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968: 332-455.
The entire article is by H. Kleinknecht, F. Baumgärtel, W. Bieder, E. Sjöberg, and E. Schweizer.

Beare, F.W. The Earliest Records of Jesus. Oxford: Blackwell, 1962.

Beasley-Murray, G.R. "Jesus and the Spirit" Mélanges Bibliques en hommage au R.P. Beda Rigaux. A. Descamps and A. de Halleux, eds. Gembloux: Duculot, 1970.

Benoit, P. "Quirinius" in Supplement au Dictionaire de la Bible. Fasc. 50b. Paris: Letouzey and Ane, 1977: 694-719.

Berger, Klaus. Die Amen Worte Jesu. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1970.

Bertram, G. "Θαυμάζω". Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. 3. G. Kittel, ed., Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965: 27-42.

Betz: O; Hengel, M.; Schmidt, P. Abraham Unser Vater, Juden und Christen im Gespräch über die Bibel. Leiden: Brill, 1963.

Billerbeck, Paul. "Ein Synagoguengottesdienst in Jesu Tagen". Zeitschrift für die neuentestamentliche Wissenschaft 55 (1964): 142-161.

Bjornard, Reidar B. Esther, Broadman Bible Commentary. C.J. Allen, ed. London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1972.

Black, Matthew. An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts, 3rd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.

Bollinger, K., and Rudolph, W. eds. Biblica Hebraica Stuttgartensia. Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1968.

Bornkamm, Gunther. Jesus of Nazareth. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1960.

Braunert, H. "Der Römerische Provinzialzensus und der Schätzungs-bericht des Lukas-evangeliums". Historia 6 (1957): 192-214.

Brockington, L.H. Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther. London: Nelson, 1969.

Brown, Colin. The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology vol. 1. Exeter: Paternoster, 1975.

Brown, F.; Driver, S.R.; Briggs, C. Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906.

Brun, Lyder. "Der Besuch Jesu in Nazareth nach Lukas". Symbolae Osloenses Fasc. Supplement 4. Osloae: Serta Rudbergiana, 1931: 7-17.

Büchler, Adolf. "Reading of the Law and Prophets in Triennial Cycle" pt. 1 Jewish Quarterly Review 5 (1893): 420-468; pt. 2 Jewish Quarterly Review 6 (1894): 1-73.

Buckers, Hermann. Die Sozialen Grundideen der alttestamentlichen Gesetze und Einrichtungen. Freiburg: Thomas, 1953.

Buhl, Frants. "Social Institutions of the Israelites". American Journal of Theology 1 (1897): 728-740.

Bultmann, Rudolf. "ἀλήθεια" Theological Dictionary of the New Testament vol. 1. G. Kittel, ed. Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964: 232-247.
The entire article is by G. Quell and R. Bultmann and G. Kittel.

_____. "ἀπελπίζω" Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. 2. G. Kittel, ed., Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964: 533-534.

_____. "ἀφίημι" Theological Dictionary of the New Testament vol. 1. G. Kittel, ed., Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964: 509-512.

_____. The History of the Synoptic Tradition. 2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell, 1968.

_____. Theology of the New Testament. New York: Scribners, 1959.

Bunn, John T. Ezekiel, Broadman Bible Commentary, C.J. Allen, ed., London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1972.

Cadbury, Henry J. "Four Features of Lukan Style" in Studies in Luke-Acts. Keck, Martyn eds. London: S.P.C.K., 1968.

_____. The Making of Luke-Acts. London: S.P.C.K., 1968.

_____. The Style and Literary Method of Luke. Harvard Theological Studies 6. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920.

Caird, G.B. The Gospel of Luke, Pelican Bible Commentary. London: A. & C. Black, 1968.

Campbell, Edward F. Ruth, Anchor Bible Series. Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1975.

Cannon, W.W. "Isaiah 61:1-3, an ebed-Jahweh poem". Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 60 (1929): 284-288.

Carley, Keith. The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, Cambridge Bible Commentary on the New English Bible. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974.

Carpenter, J. Estlin. Composition of the Hexateuch. London: Longmans, 1902.

Cave, C.H. "The Sermon at Nazareth and the Beatitudes in Light of the Synagogue Lectionary". Texte und Untersuchung 88 (1964): 231-235.

Charles, R.H. The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English, 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976-77 reprint of 1913 edition.

_____. The Book of Jubilees. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1902.

Chiera, Edward. Nuzi Texts 3: Exchange and Security Documents: Joint Expedition with Iraq Museum at Nuzi. Paris: Geuthner, 1931.

Childs, Brevard. Exodus. London: SCM, 1974.

Clements, Ronald E. Leviticus, Broadman Bible Commentary. CJ Allen, ed. London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1972.

Cohen, Mortimer J. Pathways Through the Bible. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1946.

Conzelmann, Hans. "Luke's Place in the Development of Early Christianity" in Studies in Luke-Acts. Keck and Martyn, eds. London: S.P.C.K., 1968.

_____. Outline of the Theology of the New Testament. London: SCM, 1968.

_____. The Theology of Luke. London: Faber and Faber, 1960.

_____. "Χάρις". Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. 9. G. Kittel, ed., Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974: 359-416.
The entire article is by H. Conzelmann and W. Zimmerli.

Cooke, G.A. Ezekiel, International Critical Commentary. S.R. Driver; A. Plummer; C. Briggs, eds. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1936.

Corbishley, Thomas, "Quirinius and the Census: A Restudy of the Evidence". Klio 29 (1936): 81-93.

Craigie, P.C. The Book of Deuteronomy, the New International Commentary on the Old Testament. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1976.

Creed, J.M. The Gospel According to St. Luke. London: Macmillan, 1965.

Crockett, Larrimore. "Luke 4:16-30 and the Jewish Lectionary Cycle: A Word of Caution". Journal of Jewish Studies 17 (1966): 13-46.

_____. "Luke 4:25-27 and Jewish-Gentile Relations in Luke-Acts". Journal of Biblical Literature 88 (1969): 177-183.

_____. The Old Testament in the Gospel of Luke, with Special Emphasis on the Interpretation of Isaiah 61:1-2. Ph.D., Brown University 1966. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms.

Cullmann, Oscar. The Christology of the New Testament. London: SCM, 1959.

Curtis, Edward L. The Books of Chronicles, International Critical Commentary. S.R. Driver, A. Plummer, C. Briggs, eds. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1910.

Dabeck, P. "Siehe, es Erschienen Moses und Elias". Biblica 23 (1942): 175-189.

Dahood, Mitchell. Psalms I,II,III. 3 vols. Anchor Bible Series. Garden City: Doubleday and Co. 1965-1970.

Dalman, Gustaf. Arbeit und Sitte in Palestine I. Hildesheim: Olms, 1964.

_____. Jesus-Jeshua. New York: KTAV, 1971.

_____. Sacred Sites and Ways. New York: S.P.C.K., 1935.

Danby, Herbert. The Mishnah. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933.

David, M. "The Manumission of Slaves Under Zedekiah". Oudtestamentische Studiën 5 (1948): 63-79.

Davidson, A.B. Ezekiel, Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900.

Davies, Paul. "Jesus and the Role of the Prophet". Journal of Biblical Literature 64 (1945): 241-254.

Davies, W.D. The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964.

Delitzsch, F. Prophecies of Isaiah II. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1890.

Delling, G. "Πληρόω" Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. 6. G. Kittel, ed., Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968: 283-311.

Derrett, J. Duncan M. "Further Light on the Narratives of the Nativity". Novum Testamentum 17 (1975): 81-108.

_____. "Parable of the Unjust Steward, Fresh Light on St. Luke 16". New Testament Studies 7 (1960-61): 198-219.

Dibelius, Martin. From Tradition to Gospel. London: Nicholson and Watson, 1934.

Dillman, August. Der Prophet Isaias. Leipzig: Hirzel, 1890.

Dodd, C.H. The Fourth Gospel. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953.

_____. "Jesus as Teacher and Prophet" in Mysterium Christi. Bell and Deissmann, eds. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1930.

_____. More New Testament Studies. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1968.

_____. The Parables of the Kingdom. London: Nisbet & Co., 1961.

Driver, G.R. The Judean Scrolls. Oxford: Blackwell, 1965.

Driver, S.R. Deuteronomy, International Critical Commentary. SR Driver, A Plummer, C. Briggs, eds. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1902.

Drury, John. Tradition and Design in Luke's Gospel. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1976.

Dunn, James D.G. Jesus and the Spirit. London: SCM, 1975.

_____. Unity and Diversity in the New Testament. London: SCM, 1977.

Easton, B.S. The Gospel According to St. Luke. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1926.

_____. "Linguistic Evidence for the Lucan Source 'L'". Journal of Biblical Literature 28 (1910): 139-181.

Edersheim, A. The Life and Times of Jesus, the Messiah. 2 vol. London: Longman, 1897.

Eerdmans, Bernadus. Alttestamentliche Studien IV, Das Buch Leviticus. Giessen: Töpelmann, 1912.

Ehrlich, Arnold. Randglossen zur Hebraischen Bibel. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1909.

Eichrodt, Walther. "Religionsgeschichte Israels" in Historia Mundi 2. Berne: Francke, 1953.

Eisenstein, Judah David. "Sabbatical Year and Jubilee". The Jewish Encyclopedia, 12 vols. I. Singer, ed. London: Funk and Wagnalls, 1905.

Elliger, K. "Der Prophet Trito-jesaja". Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 49 (1931): 112-141.

Ellis, E. Earle. The Gospel of Luke, New Century Commentary. Edinburgh: Nelson, 1966.

_____. "Present and Future Eschatology in Luke". New Testament Studies 13 (1965-66): 27-41.

Epstein, I. Babylonian Talmud Translated into English, 34 vols. London: Soncino, 1935-1948.

Evans, C.F. "The Central Section of Luke's Gospel" in Studies in the Gospels. D.E. Nineham, ed. Oxford: Blackwell, 1955.

_____. "Tertullian's References to Sentius Saturninus and the Lukan Census". Journal of Theological Studies 24 (1973): 24-39.

_____. "Uncomfortable Words V, Lk 16:31". Expository Times 81 (1969-70): 228-231.

Exell, Joseph. The Biblical Illustrator, St. Luke, vol. 1. London: Nisbet, n.d.

Farmer, W.R. The Synoptic Problem. London: Collier-Macmillan, 1964.

Fensham, F. Charles. "The Legal Background of Mt. 6:12". Novum Testamentum 4 (1960): 1-2.

Filmer, W.E. "Chronology of the Reign of Herod the Great". Journal of Theological Studies 17 (1966): 283-298.

Finegan, Jack. Handbook of Biblical Chronology. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964.

Fischer, Johann. Das Buch Isaias, 2 Teil. Bonn: Hanstein, 1939.

Fitzmyer, Joseph. Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament. London: Chapman, 1971.

_____. "4Q Testimonia and the New Testament". Theological Studies 18 (Dec. 1957): 513-537.

_____. "Further Light on Melchizedek from Qumran Cave 11". Journal of Biblical Literature 86.(1967): 25-41.

_____. "The Use of Explicit Old Testament Quotations in Qumran Literature and the New Testament". New Testament Studies 7 (1960-61): 297-333.

Flender, Helmut. St. Luke: Theologian of Redemptive History. London: S.P.C.K., 1967.

France, R.T. Jesus and the Old Testament. London: Tyndale, 1971.

Franklin, Eric. Christ the Lord. London: S.P.C.K., 1975.

Fransisco, Clyde T. I & II Chronicles, Broadman Bible Commentary CJ Allen, ed. London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1972.

Fridrichson, Anton. Die Versuchung Christi. Norsk Teologisk Tidsskrift 24 Arsgang, 1923-1924.

_____. The Problem of Miracle in Primitive Christianity. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1972.

Friedrich, G. "Εὐαγγελίζομαι". Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. 2. G. Kittel, ed., Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964: 707-721.

_____. "Κηρύσσω". Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. 3. G. Kittel, ed. Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965: 697-714.

_____. "Προφήτης". Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. 6. G. Kittel, ed. Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968: 781-861.
The entire article is by H. Krämer; R. Rendtorff; R. Meyer; and G. Friedrich.

Fuchs, Karl. Alttestamentliche Arbeitergesetzegebung im Vergleich zu Codex Hammurabi: zum altassyrischen und hethitischen Recht. Heidelberg: Evangelischer Verlag, 1935.

Fuller, R.H. Foundations of New Testament Christology. London: Lutterworth, 1965.

Gaston, Lloyd. No Stone on Another Novum Testamentum Supplement 23. Leiden: Brill, 1970.

Gilmour, S. Maclean. The Gospel of Luke, The Interpreter's Bible. G.A. Buttrick, ed. New York: Abingdon, 1952.

Ginzberg, Eli. Legends of the Jews 4 vols. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1936.

_____. "Studies in the Economics of the Bible". Jewish Quarterly Review 22(1931): 343-408.

Gispen, W.H. Het Boek Leviticus Verklaard, Commentar op het Oude Testament. Alders, Gispen and Ridderbos, eds. Kok: Kampen, 1950.

Godot, F. The Gospel of Luke. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1870.

Gordon, C.H. "Biblical Customs and the Nuzi Tablets". Biblical Archaologist 3 (1940): 1-12.

_____. "Sabbath Year Cycle or Seasonal Pattern?". Orientalia 22 (1953): 79-81.

Goudoever, J van. Biblical Calendars. Leiden: Brill, 1959.

Grässer, Erich. "Jesus in Nazareth, Notes on the Redaction and Theology of St. Mark, Mk 6:1-6". New Testament Studies 16 (1969-70): 1-23.

Gray, John. Joshua, Judges and Ruth. London: Nelson, 1967.

Green, James, Jeremiah, Broadmann Bible Commentary. CJ Allen, ed. London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1972.

Greenberg, Moshe. "Idealism and Practicality in Num. 35:4-5 and Ezekiel 48:1". Journal of the American Oriental Society 88 (1968): 59-66.

_____. "Sabbatical Year and Jubilee" Encyclopedia Judaica 16 vols. Cecil Roth, ed. Jerusalem: Keter, 1971: 574-586.
The entire article is written by M. Greenberg; A. Rothkoff; and S. Safrai.

Gregorios, Metropolitan Paul. "To Proclaim Liberation" in To Set at Liberty the Oppressed. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1975: 186-193. R.D.N. Dickinson, ed.

Grobel, K. "Whose Name was Neves". New Testament Studies 10 (1963-64): 372-382.

Grundmann, W. "δεκτός". Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. 2. G. Kittel, ed. Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964: 58-59.

_____. Das Evangelium Nach Lukas, Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament. E. Fascher, ed. Munich: Beck, 1964.

Guilding, Aileen. The Fourth Gospel and Jewish Worship. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960.

Haenchen, Ernst. Der Weg Jesu. Berlin: Töpelmann, 1966.

Hahn, Ferdinand. The Titles of Jesus in Christology. London: Lutterworth, 1969.

Hamrick, Emmet W. Ezra-Nehemiah, Broadman Bible Commentary. CJ Allen, ed. London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1972.

Harding, E. Elmer. "Fasts and Feasts", Hastings Dictionary of the Bible. J. Hastings, ed. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1902.

Harnack, A. "Das Magnificat der Elisabeth (Lk 1:46-55) nebst einigen Bemerkungen zu Luke 1 & 2". Studien des Neuen Testaments und der alten Kirche: I. Zur neutestamentlichen Text Kritik. Berlin: Reimer, 1931.

Hartford-Battersby, G. "Sabbatical Year". Hastings Dictionary of the Bible. J. Hastings, ed. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1902.

Hasler, Victor. "Amen, Juden Mission und Juden Schuld". Theologische Zeitschrift 24 (1968): 173-190.

Hatch, E. Essays in Biblical Greek. Oxford: Clarendon, 1889.

Hatch, E. and Redpath, H. A Concordance to the Septuagint and Other Greek Versions of the Old Testament. Oxford: Clarendon, 1897-1906.

Hauck, F. Das Evangelium des Lukas. Tübingen: Mohr, 1934.

_____. "ὀφειλω". Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. 5. G. Kittel, ed., Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967: 559-566.

Hayles, David, "The Roman Census and Jesus' Birth". Pt 1 "The Roman Census System", Buried History 9 (1973): 113-132. Pt 2 "Quirinius' Career and a Census in Herod's Day". Buried History 10 (1974): 16-31.

Heinisch, Paul. Das Buch Leviticus. Bonn: Hanstein, 1935.

Hennecke, E. New Testament Apocrypha I & II. London: SCM, 1973 & 1975.

Henry, Matthew. An Exposition of the Old and New Testaments, vol. 5. London: Bohn, 1851.

Herbert, A. Isaiah 1-39, Cambridge Bible Commentary. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973.

Hill, David. "The Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth". Novum Testamentum 13 (1971): 161-180.

Hobart, William K. The Medical Language of St. Luke. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1882.

Hoenig, Sidney. "Sabbatical Years and the Year of Jubilee". Jewish Quarterly Review 59-60 (1968-70): 222-236.

Hooker, Morna. Jesus and the Servant. London: S.P.C.K., 1959.

Huck, Albert. Synopsis of the First Three Gospels, 9th ed. Revised by H. Leitzmann, English edition by F.L. Cross. Oxford: Blackwell, 1957.

Hunkin, J.W. "Pleonastic ἄρχομαι in the New Testament". Journal of Theological Studies 25 (1924): 390-402.

Hyatt, J.P. Exodus, New Century Bible. London: Oliphants, 1971.

Instinsky, H.U. Das Jahr der Geburt Christi. Munich: Kösel, 1957.

Jeremias, Joachim. Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus. London: SCM, 1969.

_____. Jesus' Promise to the Nations. Studies in Biblical Theology 24. London: SCM, 1958.

_____. The Lord's Prayer. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964.

_____. "Μωϋσῆς". Theological Dictionary of the New Testament vol. 4. G. Kittel, ed., Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967: 848-874.

_____. New Testament Theology. London: SCM, 1971.

_____. The Parables of Jesus. London: SCM, 1963.

_____. The Prayers of Jesus. London: SCM, 1967.

_____. "Sabbathjahr und neutestamentliche Chronologie". Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 27 (1928): 98-103.

_____. "Untersuchungen zum Quellenproblem der Apostelgeschichte" Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 36 (1937): 205-221.

Jirku, Anton. "Das Israelitische Jobeljahr" in Reinhold-Seeberg Festschrift 2:zur Praxis des Christentums. Leipzig: Scholl, 1929.

Jones, D.R. "Background and Character of the Lukan Psalms". Journal of Theological Studies 19 (1968): 19-50.

de Jonge, M. and van der Woude, A.S. "11Q Melchizedek and the New Testament". New Testament Studies 12 (1965-66): 301-326.

_____. "The Use of the Word 'Anointed' in the Time of Jesus". Novum Testamentum 8 (1964-65): 132-148.

Josephus, Flavius. The Works of Josephus. Translated by Thackeray (I-V); Marcus (VI-XV); Wikgren (XVI-XVII); Feldman (XVIII-XX). Loeb Classical Library. London: Heinemann, 1934-1967.

Kaiser, Otto. Isaiah 13-39. London: SCM, 1974.

Käsemann, Ernst. Essays on New Testament Themes. London: SCM, 1964.

Keck, Leander, "Jesus' Entrance Upon His Mission". Review and Expositor 62 (1967): 465-483.

_____. and Martyn, J.L. Studies in Luke-Acts. London: S.P.C.K., 1968.

Kessler, M. "The Law of Manumission in Jer. 34". Biblische Zeitschrift 15 (1971): 105-108.

Kittel, G. "αἰμάλωτος" Theological Dictionary of the New Testament vol. 1. G. Kittel, ed., Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964: 195-197.

_____. and Friedrich, G. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. English Translation of Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament. G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-1977.

Kittel, Rudolph, Biblia Hebraica, 3rd ed. Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1937.

Klostermann, August. "Über die Kalendarische Bedeutung des Jobeljahres". Theologischen Studien und Kritiken 53 (1880): 720-748.

Klostermann, E. and Bauer, W. Die Evangelien Handbuch zum Neuen Testament. Tübingen: Mohr, 1919.

Knox, W.L. Sources of the Synoptic Gospels, 2 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957.

Koch, Robert. "Der Gottesgeist und der Messias". Biblica 27 (1946): 241-268 and 376-403.

Kopp, Clemens. Holy Places in the Gospels. Edinburgh: Nelson, 1962.

Kraybill, Donald. The Upside Down Kingdom. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1978.

Kugler, F.X. Von Moses bis Paulus: Forschungen zur Geschichte Israels. Münster: Aschendorff, 1922.

Kümmel, W.G. Introduction to the New Testament. London: SCM, 1966.

_____. Promise and Fulfilment. London: SCM, 1957.

_____. Theology of the New Testament. London: SCM, 1972.

Ladd, George. The Presence of the Future. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974.

LaGrange, M-J. Évangile selon saint Luc. Paris: Gabalda, 1941.

Leach, E.R. "A Possible Method of Intercalation for the Calendar of the Book of Jubilees". Vetus Testamentum 7 (1957): 392-397.

Leaney, A.R.C. The Gospel According to St. Luke. London: Black, 1958.

_____. The Rule of Qumran and Its Meaning. London: SCM, 1966.

Lemche, N.P. "The Manumission of Slaves--The Fallow Year--The Sabbatical Year--The Yobel Year". Vetus Testamentum 26 (1976): 38-59.

Lemoine, Francois-Marie. "Le jubilé dans la Bible" Vie Spirituelle 81. (1949): 262-288.

Lewy, Julius. "The Biblical Institution of deror in Light of Akkadian Documents". Eretz Israel 5 (1958): 21-31.

_____. and Lewy, Hildegard. "The Origin of the Week and the Oldest West Asiatic Calendar". Hebrew Union College Annual 17 (1942): 1-152.

Liddell, Henry and Scott, Robert. Greek-English Lexicon, 9th ed. rev. by Henry Jones. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958.

Lightfoot, R.H. History and Interpretation of the Gospels. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1934.

Lindars, Barnabas. New Testament Apologetic. London: SCM, 1973.

Linnemann, Eta. Parables of Jesus. London: S.P.C.K., 1966.

Lohmeyer, E. Das Vater-Unser. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1946.

Lohse, Eduard. New Testament Environment. London: SCM, 1976.

Loisy, Alfred. L'Évangile Selon Luc. Paris: Nourry, 1924.

Longenecker, Richard N. The Christology of Early Jewish Christianity. London: SCM, 1970.

Lund, Nils. Chiasmus in the New Testament. Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1942.

MacDonald, John. The Theology of the Samaritans. London: SCM, 1964.

Mackenzie, Roderick A.F. Deuteronomy, A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture. London: Nelson, 1953.

Mackinlay, G. The Magi, How They Recognized Christ's Star. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1907.

Major, H.D.A.; Manson, T.W.; Wright, C.J. The Mission and Message of Jesus. London: Nicholson and Watson, 1937.

Mánek, Jindrich. "The New Exodus in the Books of Luke". Novum Testamentum 2 (1958): 8-23.

Mann, Joseph. The Bible as Read and Preached in the Old Synagogue. New York: KTAV, 1971.

Manson, W. The Gospel of Luke. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1937.

Marchall, L. Evangile selon saint Luc. Paris: Gabalda, 1946.

Marshall, I. Howard. The Gospel of Luke. Exeter: Paternoster, 1978.

_____. Luke, Historian and Theologian. Exeter: Paternoster, 1970.

_____. "Who Commended the Unjust Steward?" Journal of Theological Studies 19 (1968): 617-619.

Masson, Charles. "Jesus a Nazareth". in Vere Les Sources D'eau Vive Lausanne: Libraire de l'universite, 1961.

Meek, Theophile. Hebrew Origins, The Haskell Lectures 1933-1934. New York: Harper, 1936.

Meeks, Wayne. The Prophet-King. Leiden: Brill, 1967.

Mendelsohn, I. "Slavery in the Old Testament". Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, R-Z. New York: Abingdon, 1962: 383-390.

Menes, Abram. "Die Vorexilischen Gesetze Israels". Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentlichen Wissenschaft 50. Giessen: Töpelmann, 1928.

Metzger, Bruce M. Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, London: United Bible Societies, 1971.

Meyer, Heinrich. Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Edinburgh: Clark, 1880.

Michaelis, W. Die Gleichnisse Jesu. Hamburg: Furche-Verlag, 1956.

Michel, O. "τελώνης". Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. 8. G. Kittel, ed., Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972: 88-105.

Miller, Merrill. "The Function of Isa. 61:1-2 in 11Q Melchizedek". Journal of Biblical Literature 88 (1969): 467-469.

Miller, Patrick. "Luke 4:16-21". Interpretation 29, No. 4 (Oct. 1975): 417-421.

Minear, Paul. To Heal and To Reveal. New York: Seabury, 1976.

Moehring, H.R. "The Census in Luke as an Apologetic Device". Novum Testamentum Supplement 33 (1972): 144-160.

Montefiore, H. "Josephus and the New Testament". Novum Testamentum 4 (1960): 139-160.

_____. The Synoptic Gospels II. London: Macmillan, 1909.

Morgenstern, Julius. "The Book of the Covenant". Hebrew Union College Annual 7 (1930): 19-258.

_____. "Isaiah 61". Hebrew Union College Annual 40 (1969): 109-121.

_____. "Supplementary Studies in the Calendars of Ancient Israel". Hebrew Union College Annual 10 (1935): 1-148.

_____. "The Three Calendars of Ancient Israel". Hebrew Union College Annual 1 (1924): 13-79.

_____. "Year of Jubilee". Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible

Morris, Leon. The New Testament and the Jewish Lectionaries. London: Tyndale, 1964.

Moulton, W.F. and Geden, A.S. A Concordance to the Greek New Testament. 2nd ed. Edinburgh: Clark, 1899.

Mowinckel, Sigmund. "Psalms and Wisdom". Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East. M. Noth and D. Thomas, eds. Vetus Testamentum Supplement 3. Leiden: Brill, 1956.

Neufeld, C.F. "The Rate of Interest and the Text of Nehemiah 5:11". Jewish Quarterly Review 45 (1954): 199-200.

_____. "Socio-economic Background of Yobel and Shemitta". Rivista degli Studi Orientali 33 (1958): 119-124.

Nicholson, E.W. Jeremiah 26-52, Cambridge Bible Commentary on the New English Bible. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975.

Nineham, D.E. Historicity and Chronology in the New Testament. London: S.P.C.K., 1965.

_____. Studies in the Gospels. Oxford: Blackwell, 1955.

Nötscher, F. Jeremias. Bonn: Hanstein, 1934.

North, Robert. "Maccabean Sabbath Years". Biblica 34 (1953): 501-515.

_____. Sociology of the Biblical Jubilee. Analecta Biblica Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1954.

_____. "Yad in Shemittah Law". Vetus Testamentum 4 (1954): 196-199.

Noth, Martin. Leviticus. London: SCM, 1965.

Oesterley, W.O.E. The Gospel Parables in the Light of their Jewish Background. New York: Macmillan, 1936.

Ogg, George. "The Age of Jesus When He Taught". New Testament Studies 5 (1958-59): 291-298.

_____. The Chronology of the Public Ministry of Jesus. Hertford: Epworth, 1940.

_____. "The Quirinius Question Today". Expository Times 79 (1967-68): 231-236.

O'Neill, J.C. "The Six Amen-Sayings in Luke". Journal of Theological Studies 10 (1959): 1-9.

Owens, John. Daniel, Broadman Bible Commentary. CJ Allen, ed. London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1972.

_____. Numbers, Broadman Bible Commentary. CJ Allen, ed. London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1972.

Paton, L.B. "The Original Form of Leviticus 23 and 25". Journal of Biblical Literature 18-20 (1899-1901): 36-61.

Paul, Shalom M. "Deutero Isaiah and Cuneiform Royal Inscriptions". Essays in Memory of E.A. Speiser. W. Hallo, ed. New Haven, Conn: American Oriental Society, 1968.

Pedersen, Johannes. Israel, Its Life and Culture. London: Milford, 1920.

Percy, E. Die Botschaft Jesu. Lund: W.C. Gleerup, 1953.

Perrot, Charles, "Luc 4,16-30 et la lecture Biblique de l'ancienne Synagogue". Revue des Sciences Religieuses 47 (1973): 324-340.

Perowne, S. The Life and Times of Herod the Great. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1956.

Perrin, Norman. Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus. London: SCM, 1967.

Philo. On the Cherubim; On the Virtues; Special Laws; Decalogue. Loeb Classical Library, tr. by Colson and Page. London: Heinemann, 1937.

Plummer, Alfred. The Gospel According to St. Luke, International Critical Commentary. S. Driver; A. Plummer; C. Briggs, eds. Edinburgh: Clark, 1922.

Porter, J.R. Leviticus. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.

de la Potterie, I. "L'Onction du Christ". Nouvelle Revue Theologique 80 (1955): 230-238.

Preisker, Herbert. "εὑρίσκω". Theological Dictionary of the New Testament vol. 2. G. Kittel, ed., Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965: 769-770.

Preuschen, Erwin. "Das Wort vom Verachteten Propheten". Zeitschrift für die neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft 17 (1916): 33-48.

Pritchard, James. Ancient Near Eastern Texts. 3rd ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969.

Procksch, O. Theologie des Alten Testament. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1950.

Rabinowitz, J.J. The Mishnah Megillah. London: Oxford University Press, 1931.

von Rad, Gerhard. Deuteronomy. London: SCM, 1966.

Ragg, Lonsdale. The Gospel According to St. Luke, Westminster Commentaries. London: Methuen & Co., 1922.

Rahlfs, Alfred. Septuaginta I & II. Stuttgart: Würtembergische Bibelanstalt, 1959.

Randolph, W. Jeremias. Tübingen: Mohr, 1947.

Reicke, Bo. The Gospel of Luke. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1964.

_____. "Jesus in Nazareth--Lk 4:14-30". Das Wort und die Wörter, Festschrift für G. Friedrich. H. Balz and S. Schultz, eds. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1973.

Rengstorf, K.H. "ἀποστέλλω". Theological Dictionary of the New Testament vol. 1. G. Kittel, ed., Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964.

Rese, Martin. Alttestamentliche Motiv in der Christologie des Lukas. Mohn: Guterlaher Verlaghaus, 1969.

Rice, Edward. "Fulfilled in Your Ears". Expository Times 29 (1917-1918): 45-46.

Ringgren, Helmer. "ga'al" Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament I. H. Ringgren, ed. Berlin: Kohlhammer, 1973: 884-890.

_____. The Messiah in the Old Testament. London: SCM, 1961.

Robinson, John A.T. Redating the New Testament. London: SCM, 1976.

Roth, Cecil. "Triennial Cycle". Encyclopedia Judaica 16 vols. Cecil Roth, ed. Jerusalem: Keter, 1972: 1386-1389.

Rutherford, Adam. Treatise on Biblical Chronology. London: Institute of Pyramidology, 1957.

Safrai, Shmuel. "Sabbath Year and Jubilee". Encyclopedia Judaica. C. Roth, ed. Jerusalem: Keter, 1972: 574-586.

Sanday, W. Studies in the Synoptic Problem. Oxford: Clarendon, 1911.

Sanders, James A. "From Isaiah 61 to Luke 4" Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-Roman Cults: Studies for Morton Smith at 60, Pt. 1 New Testament. Leiden: Brill, 1975.

Sarna, N. "Zedekiah's Emancipation of Slaves and the Sabbatical Year". Alter Orient und Alttestament: Essays Presented to Cyrus Gordon. H.A. Hoffner, ed. Kevelaer: Butzon and Bercker, 1973: 143-149.

Schaff, Philip. A Popular Commentary on the New Testament. Edinburgh: Clark, 1879.

Schlätter, A. Das Evangelium des Lukas. Stuttgart: Palmer, 1947.

Schlier, Heinrich. "ἀμήν". Theological Dictionary of the New Testament vol. 1. G. Kittel, ed., Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964: 335-338.

Schnider, Franz. Jesus der Prophet. Orbis Biblicus Et Orientalis 2. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1973.

Schniewind, J. Das Evangelium Matthäus. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1962.

Schramm, Tim. Der Markus-Stoff Bei Lukas. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971.

Schürer, Emil. The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ vol. 1. M. Black, revision ed. Edinburgh: Clark, 1973.

Schürmann, H. Das Lukasevangelium, Erster Teil. Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament. Freiburg: Herder, 1969.

_____. "Der Bericht vom Anfang--Ein Rekonstruktionsversuch auf Grund von Lk 4:14-16". Texte und Untersuchung 87 (1964): 242-258.

_____. "Zur Traditionsgeschichte der Nazareth Perikope, Lk 4:16-30". in Mélanges Bibliques en Hommages au R.P. Béda Rigaux. Gembloux: Duculot, 1970: 187-205.

Schweizer, Eduard. Jesus. London: SCM, 1971.

_____. "υἱός". Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. 8. G. Kittel, ed., Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972: 363-392.

Sherwin-White, A.N. Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament. Oxford: Clarendon, 1963.

Skinner, J. Isaiah, Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1929.

Sloan, Robert. The Favorable Year of the Lord. Austin: Schola Press, 1977.

Smart, James D. History and Theology in 2nd Isaiah. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965.

Smith, George. Historical Geography of the Holy Land. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1931.

Smith, J.B. Greek-English Concordance to the New Testament. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1974.

Snaith, Norman. "The Daughters of Zelophehad". Vetus Testamentum 16. (1966): 124-127.

_____. Leviticus and Numbers, New Century Bible. London: Nelson, 1967.

Sparks, H.F.D. "Semitisms in Luke". Journal of Theological Studies 44 Oxford: Clarendon, 1943.

Spitta, F. Die Synoptische Grundschaft und Ihre Überlieferung Durch das Lukasevangelium. Leipzig: Scholl, 1912.

Stählin, G. "σκάνδαλον". Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. 7. G. Kittel, ed., Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971: 339-358.

Stanton, G.N. Jesus of Nazareth in New Testament Preaching. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974.

Stauffer, Ethelbert. Jesus and His Story. New York: Knopf, 1970.

Stone, Edward. "The Hebrew Jubilee Period". Westminster Review 175 (1911): 684-696.

Stonehouse, N.B. The Witness of Luke to Christ. London: Tyndale, 1951.

Strack, Hermann L. Die Bücher Exodus, Leviticus, Numeri. Munich: Beck, 1894.

_____. and Billerbeck, Paul. Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch IV. Munich: Beck, 1928.

Strathmann, H. "μαρτυρέω". Theological Dictionary of the New Testament vol. 4. G. Kittel, ed., Translated by G. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967: 474-514.

Strauss, D.F. The Life of Jesus Critically Examined. London: SCM, 1972. ET of Das Leben Jesu, 1835.

Streeter, B.H. The Four Gospels, A Study of Origins. London: Macmillan, 1936.

Strobel, August. "Das Apokalyptischen Terminproblem in der Sogennanten Antrittspredigt Jesu, Lk 4:16-30". Theologische Literaturzeitung 92, No. 4 (1967): 251-254.

_____. "Die Ausrufung des Jobeljahres in der Nazarethpredigt Jesu: zur apokalyptischen Tradition, Lk 4:16-30". Jesus in Nazareth, Beiheft für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 40 (1972): 38-50.

_____. "Ursprunge und Geschichte des Frühchristlichen Osterkalendars". Texte und Untersuchung 121 (1977): 81-97.

Stuhlmacher, P. Das Paulinische Evangelium, I Vorgeschichte. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1968.

Sulzberger, Mayer. "The Polity of the Ancient Hebrews". Jewish Quarterly Review 3 (1912): 1-81.

Syme, R. "Galatia and Pamphylia under Augustus: The Governorships of Piso, Quirinius and Silvanus". Klio 27 (1934): 122-148.

Tannehill, Robert. "The Magnificat as Poem". Journal of Biblical Literature 93 (1974): 263-275.

_____. "The Mission of Jesus According to Lk 4:16-30" Jesus in Nazareth, Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 40 (1972): 51-75.

Taylor, L.R. "Quirinius and the Census of Judaea". American Journal of Philology 54 (1933): 120-133.

Taylor, Vincent. Behind the Third Gospel. Oxford: Clarendon, 1926.

_____. The Passion Narratives of St. Luke. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.

Teeple, Howard. The Mosaic Eschatological Prophet. Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series No. 10, 1957.

Temple, Patrick. "The Rejection at Nazareth". Catholic Biblical Quarterly 17, No. 2 (April 1955): 229-242.

Thomson, James. Exposition of the Gospel According to St. Luke. Edinburgh: Black, 1849.

Tischendorff, Constantinus. Novum Testamentum Graece. Lipsiae: Giesecke and Devient, 1869.

Tolbert, Malcolm. Luke, Broadman Bible Commentary. London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1972.

Torrey, Charles. The Second Isaiah. Edinburgh: Clark, 1928.

Trocmé, André. Jesus and the Nonviolent Revolution. tr. M.Shank and M.Miller. Scottdale, Herald Press, 1973.

Turner, N. "The Relation of Luke 1 & 2 to Hebraic Sources and to the Rest of Luke-Acts". New Testament Studies 11 (1955-56): 100-109.

van Unnik, W.C. "Jesus, the Christ". New Testament Studies 8 (1961-62): 101-116.

de Vaux, Roland. Ancient Israel, Its Life and Institutions. Darton, Longman and Todd, 1961.

Vermes, Geza. The Dead Sea Scrolls in English. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975.

_____. Jesus, the Jew. London: Collins, 1973.

Via, Dan Otto. The Parables, Their Literary and Existential Dimension. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967.

Violet, Bruno. "Zum Rechten Verständnis der Nazareth-Perikope Lk 4: 16-30". Zeitschrift für neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft 37 (1938): 251-271.

Vorländer, H. "Forgiveness" The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology. vol. 1. C. Brown, ed. Exeter: Paternoster, 1975: 697-703.

Wacholder, Ben Zion. "The Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles During the Second Temple and the Early Rabbinic Period". Hebrew Union College Annual 44 (1973): 153-197.

_____. "Chronomessianism, The Timing of Messianic Movements and the Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles". Hebrew Union College Annual 46 (1975): 201-218.

Watts, John D.W. Deuteronomy, Broadman Bible Commentary. CJ Allen, ed. London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1972.

Weber, Max. "Agrarverhältnisse im Altertum". Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Sozial-und Wirtschaftsgeschichte. Tübingen: Mohr, 1924.

_____. "Wirtschaftethik der Weltreligionen. 3: Das Antike Judentum". Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie. Tübingen: Mohr, 1921.

Weingreen, J. "The Case of the Daughters of Zelophehad". Vetus Testamentum 16 (1966): 518-522.

Weiser, Artur. The Old Testament: Its Formation and Development, 4th ed. New York: Association Press, 1968.

Weiss, Bernhard, Die Quellen des Lukasevangelium. Berlin: Gotta'sche Buchandlung Nachfolger, 1907.

Wellhausen, Julius. Dae Evangelium Lucae. Berlin: Reimer, 1904.

Westcott, B.F. and Hort, F.J. Greek New Testament. Cambridge: Macmillan, 1881.

Westermann, Claus. Isaiah 40-66. London: SCM, 1969.

Wevers, John W. Ezekiel, New Century Bible. London: Nelson, 1969.

Wiesenberg, Ernest. "The Jubilee of Jubilees". Revue de Qumran 9, vol. 3 (1961): 3-40.

Wilkie, Fritz. "Sozialismus im Hebräischen Altertum" Religion und Sozialismus. Festschrift der Evangelisch Theologischen Fakultät in Wien. Berlin: Runge, 1921.

Williams, Francis E. "Is Almsgiving the Point of the 'Unjust Steward'?". Journal of Biblical Literature 83 (1964): 293-297.

Wink, Walter. John the Baptist in Gospel Tradition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968.

Winter, Paul. "Magnificat and Benedictus--Maccabean Psalms?". Bulletin of the John Rylands Library 37 (1954-55): 328-347.

van der Woude, A.S. "Melchizedek als himmlische Erlösergestalt in den neugefunded eschatologischen Midraschim aus Qumran-Höhle 11". Oudtestamentlische Studiën Deel 14 (1965): 354-374.

Wrede, W. Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1963.

Wright, C.J.H. "Ethics and the Old Testament" The Third Way pt. 1 - (May, 1977): 7-9; pt. 2 - (May 1977): 3-6; pt. 3 - (June 1977): 3-5.

_____. Family, Land and Property in Ancient Israel. unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Cambridge University, 1975.

Yadin, Y. "A Note on Melchizedek and Qumran". Israel Exploration Journal 15 (1965): 152-154.

Yoder, John H. The Politics of Jesus. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972.

Young, F.W. "Jesus the Prophet: A Re-examination". Journal of Biblical Literature 68 (1949): 285-299.

Zeitlin, Solomon. "Book of Jubilees, Its Character and Its Significance". Jewish Quarterly Review 30 (1939-40): 1-31.

_____. "Dates of the Birth and Crucifixion of Jesus". Jewish Quarterly Review 55 (1964): 1-22.

_____. "Megillat Ta'anit as a Source for Jewish Chronology and History in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods". Jewish Quarterly Review 9 (1918): 71-102.

_____. "Notes Relative au calendrier juif". Revue des Etudes Juives 89 (1930): 349-359.

_____. "Prosbul". Jewish Quarterly Review 37 (1946-47): 341-362.

Zimmerli, W. Archäologie und Alt Testament. Tübingen: Mohr, 1970.

Zuckermann, B. A Treatise on Sabbatical Cycle and the Jubilee. tr. by A. Löwy. New York: Hermon Press, 1974.